The Life Of Muhammad ﷺ

Makkan Period

Imām Anwar al-'Awlaqī
Rahimahullāh

I seek refuge in Allāh from Satan the Accursed.
In the name of Allāh, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful.

[All] praise is [due] to Allāh, Lord of the worlds.
The Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful.
Master of the Day of Recompense.
It is You we worship and You we ask for help.
Guide us to the straight path.
The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favour.
Not of those who have evoked [Your] anger or of those who are astray.[1]

O Prophet, indeed We have sent you as a witness,
And a bringer of good tidings and a warner.
And one who invites to Allāh, by His permission,
And an illuminating lamp.[2]

The Life of Muhammad ﷺ

The Life of Muhammad ﷺ introduces the Makkan Period [and the Madīnan Period] of the Seerah of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, the final Messenger of Allāh and the greatest human being to walk on the face of the Earth. In this series, Imām Anwar Al-'Awlaqī, author of the best-selling series *The Life of the Prophets*, eloquently presents the Makkan Period [and the Madīnan Period] of the Prophet's life in a detailed manner, deriving valuable lessons from it and thus making it relevant to our modern times. The series is primarily based on Ibn Kathīr's book on the Seerah. Imām Al-'Awlaqī brings to life stories from the golden era of Islām in a dynamic style, and instils in the listeners a deep love for the beloved of Allāh ﷻ.

Author's Autobiography

Imām Anwar Al-'Awlaqī was a Muslim scholar of Yemeni heritage who was born in New Mexico. Initially, he served as an Imām in California, and then later in Washington, D.C. where he headed the Dār Al-Hijrah Islamic Center and was also the Muslim Chaplain at George Washington University. In 2004, he returned to his native Yemen where he taught at the University of Eman, until his arrest in mid-2006. Imām Anwar was released from custody on 12th December 2007 having spent a year and a half in prison. In his first interview since his release, the Sheikh spoke about the conditions of his detention and shared his reflections on his time in prison. Regarding his time spent in prison, he said, "It was a chance to review Qur'ān and to study and read in a way that was impossible out of jail. My time in detention was a vacation from this world. I still see my detention as a blessing and I believe that I am still enjoying the fruits of those blessings until this moment."

On September 30, 2011, in northern Yemen's al-Jawf province, two Predator drones fired Hellfire missiles at a vehicle containing Imām Anwar Al-'Awlaqī, and thus the Sheikh attained Shahādah, Inshā'Allāh. May Allāh have mercy on him.

Educational Background

In response to a question posed on his blog, the Sheikh explained his credentials and whom he studied under. I have added this here and left the Sheikh's words unaltered:

> "Alhamdulillah I have had the chance to experience the various methods of gaining Islamic knowledge through studying directly under shuyukh in their general circles or privately. I have experienced the regular academic method of university study, studying by correspondence, and studying directly from books.

Studying under shuyukh in their general circles

I have attended the circles of the scholars of Makkah and Madina for a combined period of a few months and for a short while attended the circle of Shaykh Ibn Uthaymeen.

Studying under shuyukh privately

In addition to an ijaza in Quran recitation according to the recitation of Hafs I have read and completed Sahih al Bukhari with Shaykh AbdulRahman Shumailah al Ahdal and he has given me ijazah to narrate Sahih al Bukhari from him through three high isnaads, one of them being the highest existing isnaad in the world. The other two he has received from his shuyukh in Makkah.

I have also read and completed Sahih Muslim and al Muwata by Imam Malik with Shaykh AbdulRahman and he has given me ijazah on both books.

I have studied al Minhaaj by Imaam Nawawi on Shafi fiqh with Shaykh AbdulRahman al Ahdal and Shaykh Hamud al Ahdal and received ijaza from both of them.

The above mentioned shuyukh have also given me ijazah to narrate through their isnaad the six books of Hadith, al Adhkaar by Imaam Nawawi, al Shifa by Qadhi Iyaad, and some other books in Shafi fiqh.

I have studied, traveled and lived with Shaykh Hassan al Ahdal and it was through him that I got to study with other scholars from this blessed family of scholars who are descendants of al Hussain bin Ali may Allah be pleased with them. They are based in al Marawa'ah in Tihama which is in the Western part of Yemen on the coast of the Red Sea and this is the land of the Sahabi Abu Musa al Ash'ari. He has given me a general ijaza in the six books of hadith, Buloogh al Maraam by Ibn Hajjar al Asqalani, Umdat al Ahkaam by al Maqdisi, al Minhaaj by al Nawawi, al Ghaya wal Taqreeb by Abu Shuja, and al Waraqaat by al Juwaini.

I have spent a short time with Shaykh Salman al Odah.

I have benefited considerably from the scholars I met in the US during the 90's, a time in which there was a great influx of scholars in America.

And last but not least, I have benefited and continue to benefit from the Shaykh whom I trust his deen and know him to be a scholar who does not fear in the sake of Allah and is willing to stand up for the truth, Shaykh Hussein bin Mahfoodh. He is a friend whose relationship with me extends over the years. Until this day, I consult with him on the various important aspects of Sharia that I am presented with and I have continued to benefit from his knowledge and wisdom over the years. I have accompanied him and traveled with him and consider him to be one of the best scholars that I have come to know.

Regular academic university study

In 2002 I was given permission from the administration of the University of Eman in Yemen to attend any class at any level and I took advantage of this and attended classes in Tafsir and Fiqh for a period of a few months. I have also benefited from the teachings of Shaykh Abdul Majid al Zindani the Rector of the University.

Studying Sharia by Correspondence

I studied for two years through correspondence with the Islamic university in France. I lost interest and discontinued my studies with them because I reached the conclusion that it was not a proper method of disseminating Islamic knowledge. This was in the mid 90's so things must have changed now in the field of correspondence study due to advances in technology.

Studying from Books

After receiving the basics from the scholars and the keys of knowledge, learning from books is a lifelong practice of the seeker of knowledge.

My Ijazah

In addition to the ijaza's I have mentioned above I have a general ijaza in Quran, Sciences of Quran, Hadith, Sciences of Hadith, Tafsir, Fiqh, Usool Fiqh and Arabic from:

Shaykh Hassan Maqbooli al Ahdal
Shaykh Hussein bin Mahfoodh
Shaykh AbdulRahman Shumailah al Ahdal
Shaykh Hamud Shumailah al Ahdal

Arabic Symbols Used

Symbol	Arabic Text	Translation
	جل جلاله	May His glory be glorified
	صلى الله عليه وسلم	May the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him
	عليه السلام	Peace be upon him
	رضي الله عنه	May Allāh be pleased with him
	رضي الله عنها	May Allāh be pleased with her
	رضي الله عنهما	May Allāh be pleased with them both
	رضي الله عنهم	May Allāh be pleased with them
	رحمه الله	May Allāh have mercy on him

English Punctuations Used for Arabic

Arabic	English	Definition
ء	'	Used as a replacememnt for ء. For example, أنبياء would be spelt Ambiyā'.
ا	Ā/ā	Used in place of ا in order to elongate the letter. For example, إسلام would be Islām, هاجر would be Hājar.
و	Ū/ū	Used in place of و in order to elongate the letter. For example, أبو ذر would be Abū Dharr, يوسف would be Yūsuf
ي	Ī/ī	Used in place of ي in order to elongate the letter. For example, الحديث would be Al-Hadīth, ابن كثير would be Ibn-Kathīr.
ـيـ	ï/ ÿ	Used whenever a word ends with a Tashdeed. For example, قصي would be spelt Qusaÿ, علي would be spelt ‘Alï.
ع	‘	Used for ع. For example, عمر would be spelt ‘Amr.
ع	’	Used for ع when it has a Sukūn. For example, صعصعة would be spelt Sa’sa‘ah. The first ع has a Sukūn on it while the latter ع has a Fathah.

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1

Introduction

In the Name of Allāh, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

My Lord, expand for me my breast [with assurance]. And ease for me my task. And untie the knot from my tongue. That they may understand my speech.[3]

All praise is due to Allāh. May the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon our master Muhammad, and may Allāh bestow upon his family and Companions much peace. We ask Allāh ﷻ to bless this gathering, we ask Allāh ﷻ to benefit us from what we learn, we ask Allāh ﷻ to teach us that which will benefit us, we ask Allāh ﷻ to make us of those who will follow the way of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and love him, and we ask Allāh ﷻ to make us of those who will be with him in Jannah.

Definition of Seerah

First of all we will start with the definition of *Seerah*; what does the word Seerah mean? The word Seerah has a linguistic meaning and that is a path, and walking is called *Sayr*, when you walk from one place to another you would say *Sāra Fulān* – such and such person is walking. So it is the path that a person takes during their lifetime; that is Seerah. And the Hans Wehr dictionary gives the translation of Seerah as *'conduct, comportment, demeanour, behaviour, way of life, attitude, position, reaction, way of acting and biography.'* All of these are meanings of the word Seerah. Seerah could be the biography of any person, it is not necessarily Muhammad ﷺ, however we have used the word so much with Muhammad ﷺ that when we say Seerah, we almost all the time are referring to the life of Muhammad ﷺ. But you could also say the Seerah of Abū Bakr ؓ, Seerah of 'Umar ؓ, and Seerah of so and so, it is a biography of a person, their life. So that is the meaning of the word Seerah, it is the life of a person, and in this situation we are studying the life of the greatest – Muhammad ﷺ.

Importance of Studying Seerah

What is the importance of studying Seerah?

History of Islām

The life of Muhammad ﷺ is the history of Islām; you are studying a concise history of Islām by studying the life of Muhammad ﷺ. In his Seerah we would find situations and incidences that would help us in everything that we would need to know in our life of *Da'wah*. So the life of Muhammad ﷺ is really the history of Islām. We are not just studying the biography of a person, we are studying the history of our religion.

Muhammad Ibn Sa'd Bin Waqqās – Sa'd Ibn Waqqās is one of *Al-'Asharah Al-Mubashhirīn Fil Jannah*, he is one of the ten who were given glad-tidings of Paradise – his son Muhammad says, "Our father would teach us the battles of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, he would teach us the Seerah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, and he would tell us that these are the traditions of your fathers, so study them." And they used to refer to Seerah as *Maghāzī,* Maghāzī means battles, because the latter part of the

life of Rasūlullāh ﷺ was spent in Maghāzī, so they would use the word Maghāzī to refer to the whole life of Muhammad ﷺ. And ‘Alï Ibn Husain Ibn ‘Alï Ibn Abī Tālib, the grandson of ‘Alï Ibn Abī Tālib, would say, “We were taught the Seerah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ like we were taught Qurān.” That is how important Seerah was for them, they would study it like how they would study Qurān. And that makes sense, because if we want to study the life of Mūsā ﷺ, where do we go? Where do we study it from? From Qurān. If we want to study the life of ‘Īsā ﷺ, we go to Qurān, but if we want to study the life of Muhammad ﷺ, even though there are bits and pieces of his life mentioned in Qurān, but we do not have as much details about the life of Muhammad ﷺ in Qurān as we have about Mūsā ﷺ, so for us to study the life of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, we go to Seerah. The lives of all of the Ambiyā' were recorded in Qurān with the exception of Muhammad ﷺ, we learn about Muhammad’s ﷺ life from Seerah. So when we want to learn about the *Ambiyā'*, we go to Qurān, but when we want to learn about Muhammad ﷺ, we go to his Seerah, again, even though there are some references in Qurān made to his life. We will talk about the influence of Seerah and understanding Qurān.

Love of Muhammad ﷺ

The second reason for studying Seerah: It is to develop the proper love of Muhammad ﷺ in our hearts. Loving Muhammad ﷺ is ‘*Ibādah*, it is part of our religion to love Muhammad ﷺ. He says, “One of you does not attain true faith until you love me more than you love your parents, your children, and the whole world.” We do not really become true Believers until we love Muhammad ﷺ more than anything else. So it is part of Islām to love Muhammad ﷺ. ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb ﷺ was a very honest and straight-forward person. He went to Rasūlullāh ﷺ and said “O Rasūlullāh, I love you more than anyone except myself.” Rasūlullāh ﷺ told him: “Until you love me.” Meaning you do not really attain the complete faith until you love me more than your own self. So ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb came back and said “O Rasūlullāh, now I love you more than my own self.” Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, “*Al-Āna Idhan* – Now you have attained the complete faith.”

The Ummah today loves Muhammad ﷺ. If you ask any Muslim, ‘Do you love Muhammad ﷺ?’ They would say yes, but the love cannot be very deep and sincere unless you know the person. If you have shallow information about

someone, you cannot really love them a lot. To love a person you need to know them more, and this is especially true with Muhammad ﷺ, because the more you know him, the more you would be impressed with his personality, the more you would love him. So even though the Ummah today, with the shallow information that the masses of Muslims have about him, love Muhammad ﷺ, we cannot truly have deep love for Muhammad ﷺ unless we know him. You know, the Sahābah رضي الله عنهم, the more they knew him, the closer they were to him and the more they would love him. 'Amr Ibn Al-'Aas for example, he was one of the staunchest enemies of Muhammad ﷺ, he was one of the top plotters against Islām. 'Amr Ibn Al-'Aas later became a Muslim, and when he was passing away, 'Amr Ibn Al-'Aas started weeping, he was crying on his deathbed. So his son 'Abdullāh Bin 'Amr asked him, "O my father, did Rasūlullāh ﷺ not give you the glad-tidings of this, did he not give you glad-tidings of that?" It is reported in a Hadīth that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "*Āmana 'Amr* – 'Amr Ibn Al-'Aas has attained faith." So this was a witness from Rasūlullāh ﷺ that 'Amr Ibn Al-'Aas was a *Mu'min*; not only a Muslim, but he is at the higher level of Mu'min. So his son was trying to give his father the glad-tidings that you are a true Believer, Rasūlullāh ﷺ has given you all of these glad-tidings, so how come you are crying now before your death? 'Amr Ibn Al-'Aas turned around and said, "I have gone through three stages in my life; at the first stage, the most despised man to me was Muhammad ﷺ, and my desire was that I could get a hold of him and kill him." That was my desire, that was my wish, my aspiration, to kill Muhammad ﷺ. He said, "If I had died at that time, I would have definitely been in Hellfire, but then Allāh put the love of Islām in my heart, and I went to Muhammad and I said, 'O Muhammad, I want to become Muslim. Extend your hand so that I can pledge allegiance to you.'" 'Amr Ibn Al-'Aas says, "Muhammad ﷺ extended his hand forward and I pulled my hand away." So 'Amr Ibn Al-'Aas had Rasūlullāh ﷺ extend his hand, and when Rasūlullāh ﷺ was ready to put his hand in his, 'Amr Ibn Al-'Aas pulled his hand away. Rasūlullāh ﷺ asked him, "What is wrong?" 'Amr Ibn Al-'Aas said, "I have a condition to make." Rasūlullāh ﷺ asked him, "What is your condition?" He said, "My condition is that you pardon me, you give me clemency," because 'Amr Ibn Al-'Aas knew that what he had done in the past, the great crimes that he had committed against the Muslims, was sufficient for his execution, so he wanted to make sure that Rasūlullāh ﷺ would not hold him accountable for what

he did in the past. Rasūlullāh ﷺ smiled and he said, "O 'Amr, do you not know that Islām erases everything before it, and *Hijrah* erases everything before it, and *Hajj* erases everything before it?" 'Amr Ibn Al-'Aas said, "So I became a Muslim." He said, "At that stage, Muhammad, who was my worst enemy, became the most beloved person to me in the world. And I loved him *so* much, I respected him so much, that I could not even get a full glimpse of his face; whenever I would see him, I would stare downwards." He said, "I had so much love and respect for him that I could not even get a full glimpse of his face. And if you would ask me today to describe him to you, I could not. And if I died during that stage, I would have hoped to be in Jannah." There are other parts of this Hadīth, but what concerns us now is that when 'Amr Ibn Al-'Aas got to know Muhammad ﷺ, when he became close to him, Muhammad ﷺ, who was his worst enemy, became his most beloved friend.

Suhayl Bin 'Amr was sent by Quraish to negotiate with Muhammad ﷺ before *Sulh Al-Hudaybiyyah*. Suhayl Ibn 'Amr was an international negotiator, he had been to the courts of the Persian Emperor, the Roman Emperor, the Emperor of Abyssinia; he was a well-connected man, and now Quraish had sent him to negotiate with Muhammad ﷺ. So he went into Madīnah and he came in, and he had first-hand experience with how the Sahābah رضي الله عنهم treated Muhammad ﷺ. So Suhayl Ibn 'Amr went back to report to Quraish and he told them, "I have visited the Roman Emperor, I have visited the Persian Emperor, I have visited An-Najāshī of Abyssinia, but I have never in my life seen a leader that is so loved by his followers, so much respected by his followers, like Muhammad. I have seen nothing like it in the world." The Roman Emperor, the Persian Emperor, An-Najāshī of Abyssinia, even though they have all of the power and strength and empires, I have never seen a people love their leader so much like how the Sahābah رضي الله عنهم love Muhammad ﷺ. He said, "I saw amazing things; Muhammad would be making *Wudū'* and the Sahābah would be rushing to grab the water dripping from his body." So he told them, "Do whatever you want, these are people who will never give up their leader." The Sahābah would never give him up, they would give their lives first, they would sacrifice everything for him.

So if we want to love Muhammad ﷺ, we need to learn more about him. I have already said that even though among the masses of Muslims we do not have

much information about Muhammad ﷺ, we do not know a lot about his Seerah, because it is not part of the curriculum that schools in the Muslim world teach, nevertheless, even though we are ignorant about him and his life, he is still the most beloved figure that ever lived in humanity, his name is the most common name in the world. How many people in the world are named Muhammad? There is no other person that ever lived in history who had so many people name themselves after him like Muhammad ﷺ. When I was in college in the US, we had an *Imām* who was from Nigeria, and he was a *Hāfiz* and he was our Imām in the small college town in US, and his name was Muhammad Al-'Aashir. Now, the word *'Aashir* means the tenth, so for a long time I assumed that Al-'Aashir was his last name – Muhammad Al-'Aashir. One day I went up to him and I asked, "What is Al-'Aashir? Is that the name of the tribe or the clan?" He said, "No. My father would name every male child that he had Muhammad; all of his children, he would name them Muhammad. So to distinguish between us, he had to number us, so there was Muhammad the first, Muhammad the second, Muhammad the third, and I am Muhammad the tenth!" His father did not want to deal with any other name; all of his children were going to be Muhammad. And in Pākistān and India you would have Muhammad Hārūn, Muhammad Sulaimān, Muhammad Ādam; everyone is Muhammad. There is no one in history that had an Ummah love him like the Ummah loves Muhammad ﷺ, he is the most beloved figure in history. Now, what will be the situation if we study about his life? How much love will we have then for Muhammad ﷺ? His name is the most frequently mentioned name. Around the clock, there will be a *Mi'zanah* – a minaret, that is calling to Prayer and mentioning the name of Muhammad ﷺ; around the clock, because Muslims now are worldwide, so in every time zone you have Muslims. So in every minute of the day there will be a *Mi'zanah* that is saying, "Ash'hadu Al-Lā Ilāha Illallāh, Ash'hadu Anna Muhammad Ar-Rasūlullāh." His name is mentioned around the clock. And by the way, the name Muhammad means 'The Praised One', and there is no one who is praised like Muhammad ﷺ, his name really fulfilled its meaning. He is the Praised One, he is always praised. Whenever we hear his name, what do we say? *Sallallāhu 'Alaihi Wa Sallam* - Peace be upon him. So we want to develop love of Muhammad ﷺ, and the way we can do that is by studying his life; we will love him more the more we study about him. Allāh ﷻ says: **Say, [O Muhammad], "If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your**

wives, your relatives, wealth which you have obtained, commerce wherein you fear decline, and dwellings with which you are pleased, are more beloved to you than Allāh and His Messenger and Jihād in His cause, then wait until Allāh executes His command. And Allāh does not guide the defiantly disobedient people."[4] So the Āyah is stating that our love for Allāh and His Messenger and striving in the cause of Allāh should be paramount to everything else; our fathers, our sons, our brothers, our mates, our kindred, our wealth – everything. Allāh, His Messenger and Islām should be the dearest thing to every one of us.

To Follow the Way of Muhammad ﷺ

Reason three why we study the Seerah is to follow the way of Muhammad ﷺ. Ibn Hazm says, "Whoever seeks the pre-eminence of the Hereafter, the wisdom of this life, the just purpose, and the embodiment of morality and character, let him follow Muhammad, the Prophet of Allāh." So Muhammad ﷺ is the embodiment of *Khuluq* – the perfect character, and by studying his Seerah, we will be more able to follow his way.

Understanding Qurān

There are some Āyāt in Qurān that are independent of the circumstances of their revelation, like for example, the Āyāt about Al- Ākhirah, Ar-Raqā'iq – these are independent of the circumstances. But then there are some Āyāt that were dealing with events that were happening in the time of Muhammad ﷺ. So you would have some Āyāt revealed prior to an event, some Āyāt revealed concurrent with an event, and some Āyāt revealed after an event. Seerah would give us the explanation of these Āyāt, like for example Sūrah Al-Ahzāb, many Āyāt in Sūrah Al-Ahzāb were revealed regarding the Battle of Al-Ahzāb, many Āyāt in Sūrah Āl 'Imrān were relating to events that happened in the time of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, so you have a major section of Sūrah Āl 'Imrān which was a dialogue between Muslims and Christians based on the Christian delegation that came from Najrān to visit Rasūlullāh ﷺ; these Āyāt were revealed to support Rasūlullāh ﷺ in his dialogue with the Christians. And then you also have the latter part of Āl 'Imrān dealing with Ghazwat Uhud. Now, the details of the

Ghazwah are not mentioned in the Sūrah, so how can we understand these Āyāt? By going to Seerah.

His ﷺ Life Illustrates the Methodological Steps of the Islāmic Movement

Rasūlullāh ﷺ went through stages, he went through steps, started by a secret Da'wah, and then it became public, and then later on came *Jihād*, so it went through stages. These stages are important for Islāmic movements to learn and study. Murī Al-Ghardān says, "And we believe that this methodological progression of the Prophet's life is divinely directed, for Allāh has guided His Prophet in all of his steps, and it was not a result of a reaction to emerging circumstances." So these events that happened in the life of Rasūlullāh ﷺ were not haphazard, they were planned by Allāh ﷻ, so that they would be a guidance for us in our attempts to establish Islām again. So it is very important that we look at the stages that Rasūlullāh ﷺ went through and the progression of his Da'wah. Rashīd Ridā says: "Were it not for the education and training, verbal direction would not suffice, for the Seerah taught them how to be guided by the Qurān and trained them to be just and moderate in all matters." So we have Qurān and Sunnah which are verbal teachings, but how do we apply these verbal teachings? It is by looking into the application of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and the Sahābah رضي الله عنهم. So they took this verbal teaching into action, and that is something that only the Muslims have; the followers of all the other Ambiyā' have lost trace of the Seerah of their Ambiyā', but with us, we know how the Qurān was being practiced, we know how the *Sunnah* of Rasūlullāh ﷺ was being practiced and applied.

There is an Āyah in Qurān that says that you can continue eating and drinking at night time in Ramadan until the white string is distinguished from the black string. One of the Sahābah took this literally, he had a string under his pillow, and he would eat and then he would uncover this string after picking up the pillow but he would not see the string [change in colour], so he would continue eating. He would keep on doing that, and then he went to Rasūlullāh ﷺ and said this is what I have done. Rasūlullāh ﷺ laughed and he said that the Āyah does not mean you take a string in your room and you take a look at it, it means the white string which is the first emergence of light in the horizon, that is what is

meant by it. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ taught this Sahābï how to apply that Āyah, because I could be in a dark room with no windows and I have a string with me, and it would be noontime and I still cannot see it and I am continuing to eat. So the application of the Āyāt and the Ahādīth of Rasūlullāh ﷺ are shown to us in the life of Muhammad ﷺ and the life of the Sahābah, may the blessings and pleasure of Allāh ﷻ be with them all.

Studying Seerah is 'Ibādah

We are not doing this to entertain ourselves; this is 'Ibādah, there is *Ajr* – reward, in studying this. We are worshipping Allāh by coming together and studying the life of Muhammad ﷺ. This is the *Halaqah* of Dhikr – this is a session of Dhikr. When we come together and talk about Muhammad ﷺ, we are worshipping Allāh ﷻ. And we expect that this is a gathering that will be surrounded by angels, in which Allāh ﷻ will shower us with His mercy and tranquillity, and we be mentioned in a gathering better than this. So it is 'Ibādah, and Allāh ﷻ says: **Say, [O Muhammad], "If you should love Allāh, then follow me, [so] Allāh will love you and forgive you your sins. And Allāh is Forgiving and Merciful."**[5]

Developing a Muslim Identity

Brothers and sisters, there is a global culture that is being forced down the throats of everyone on the face of the Earth; this global culture is protected and promoted. Thomas Friedman who is a famous writer in the US, he writes for the *New York Times*, he says, "The hidden hand of the market cannot survive without a hidden fist. McDonald's will never flourish without McDonnell Douglas – the designer of the F15s." In other words, we are not really dealing with a global culture that is benign or compassionate, this is a culture that gives you no choice; you either accept McDonald's, otherwise McDonnell Douglas will send their F15s above your head. It is a very intolerant culture that cannot co-exist with anything else, it uproots every other culture on the face of the Earth, just cuts the roots of it. And you have a quote here by Alexander Solzhenitsyn who is a famous Russian Historian writer, he says, "To destroy a people, you must first sever their roots." So it is really a destruction of the people of the Earth, because every other culture is being demolished. So this is

not a global culture that will co-exist with others, it will replace others, and the only ideology that is standing up to this global culture is Islām. But still, as Muslims, and especially Muslims living in the West, we are suffering from a serious identity crisis. You would find that even though the brother or the sister would be practicing Islām, but the Islāmic identity itself is lost; the person would have more in common with a rockstar or a soccer player than they would have with a Companion of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. You would find that our youth know more about popstars than they know about the Sahābah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, in fact, even sometimes more than the Ambiyā'. How many of our youth know the names of all of the Ambiyā' of Allāh? How many of our youth know the names of the Sahābah رضي الله عنهم؟ But ask the same person to name the soccer players on their favourite team or their best basketball players and they would go down the list. So there is a serious identity crisis that is going on among Muslims, and the way we can counter that, the way we can develop a Muslim identity, is by doing the following:

Having a Strong Study of Islāmic History

Number One: It is by having a strong study of Islāmic history which is made up of the lives of Prophets of Allāh, the life of Muhammad ﷺ, the life of the Sahābah رضي الله عنهم, and then learning in general the Muslim history after that. So that is number one; you develop an identity by having an attachment with history, because history is our umbilical cord, that is our lifeline. We are an extension of an Ummah, we are not separated, we are not severed from our roots. We are a part of a glorious Ummah that we need to study about.

Being Part of the Worldwide Muslim Ummah

Number Two: By being part of the worldwide Muslim Ummah. Our local identity should not override our Muslim identity. So my identification with Britain or America or Pākistān or Kuwait or any other country should not override my Islāmic identity. See, this “nation/state” concept is something that Islām came to abolish. We have our loyalty to Allāh ﷻ and to our religion, and we are part of a worldwide Ummah, therefore we need to study, we need to learn about our Muslim brethren all over the world. What happens in Falastīn should concern every British Muslim, what happens in Kashmīr should concern every American Muslim, what happens in every corner of the Muslim world should concern me as if it is happening within my own house.

So these are the two important elements in building an identity; number one, by having a deep understanding of our history, and number two, by being part of the Ummah and caring about the Ummah. And again, the saying of Alexander Solzhenitsyn is, "To destroy a people, you must first sever their roots". We do not want our roots to be severed, we want our roots to be deep. Studying the life of Rasūlullāh ﷺ is the most important ingredient in our history.

The Life of Muhammad ﷺ is a Testimony of his Prophethood

The greatest miracle of Muhammad ﷺ is Qurān, and then Rasūlullāh ﷺ has many other miracles other than that, but by just studying his life in itself is an evidence of his Prophethood. Here you have a man who for forty years was leading a normal life. The outstanding thing about the life of Muhammad ﷺ in the first forty years was his morality and character, but Rasūlullāh ﷺ did not show any signs of aspiration to power or influence, none of that at all. Rasūlullāh ﷺ was leading a normal life, and then suddenly, after the age of forty, Rasūlullāh ﷺ brings about the greatest change that the world has ever seen; that is an irony, that is a miracle. Rasūlullāh ﷺ was illiterate, he could not read or write, and then he presents the world with the greatest Book that was ever produced. And we could go on and on in a list of ironies of things that are only explained if Muhammad ﷺ is a Messenger from Allāh who has divine help, otherwise it is impossible. There is no way to explain his Seerah except to admit that he was a Nabï from Allāh ﷻ. It is impossible for a person to achieve what Muhammad ﷺ achieved without being assisted by Allāh ﷻ through Revelation. So it is a testimony of his Prophethood, it is one of *Dalā'il An-Nubuwwah*.

Then you have Muhammad ﷺ leading a normal life for the first forty years and then suddenly he becomes a political leader, military leader, religious leader, head of a large household, law-maker, teacher, Imām, and we could go on and on and on in the list of things that Rasūlullāh ﷺ used to do. All of that was done within 23 years – Impossible! This would lead us to our next point:

We are Studying the Life of the Greatest

We are studying the life of the greatest. Right now, we are studying the life of the greatest man that ever set foot on this Earth. Muhammad ﷺ is the greatest,

and whatever benchmark you want to use for greatness, he will still come out the greatest. Michael Hart, who is a US author, wrote a book called *The 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History*. I am sure many of you are familiar with his book. After studying the lives of leaders throughout history, it became clear to him that Muhammad ﷺ is undisputable greatest man that ever lived, he is the greatest. And in his introduction, he feels compelled to respond to what the readers of the book might think because he is mostly writing for a Non-Muslim audience, so many people would question his choice of Muhammad ﷺ, therefore in his introduction he writes,

> "My choice of Muhammad to lead the list of the world's most influential persons may surprise some readers and may be questioned by others, but he was the only man in history who was supremely successful on both the religious and secular levels. It is this unparalleled combination of secular and religious influence which I feel entitles Muhammad to be considered the most influential single figure in human history."

So Michael Hart is compelled by the facts. There is no doubt that Muhammad ﷺ is the greatest, but then he has to apologise to his readers, he has to say that it is out of my hands, there is no way I could put anyone else in front of him; Muhammad ﷺ *is* the greatest. In fact, if we take Muhammad ﷺ as a military leader, just that aspect of his personality, he would still come out the greatest. In fact, if we would take from Muhammad ﷺ only the religious aspect of his life, he would still be the greatest. Muhammad ﷺ the political leader, he would still come out the greatest. So even if you would dissect the different aspects of the life of Muhammad ﷺ and take them piece by piece, by just taking one piece alone, he would still be greater than everyone else that ever lived. So we are studying the life of *Al-Mustafā* – the one who is chosen, Allāh ﷻ chose him. *Al-Mustafā Min Khalqih* – he is chosen out of all of the creation of Allāh. And there might be some other reasons why studying Seerah is important.

Sources Used for this Seerah

We will be using two primary sources for this course:

Source One: The Seerah of Ibn Kathīr

Ibn Kathīr did not write a book called Seerah, Ibn Kathīr wrote an encyclopaedia of history called *Al-Bidāyah Wan-Nihāyah – The Beginning and the End*, and it is literally the beginning and the end. He started from the beginning of creation and went all the way until people enter Jannah and Nār. One of his volumes is about the life of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, another volume is about the Prophets, and then he has a volume about Al-Khalīfah Ar-Rāshidah, and Al-Khalīfah Al-Amūwiyah, Al-Khalīfah Al-'Abbāsīyah, and he went all the way up to his time, and then the last volume is about *Al-Fitan* – The Signs of the Day of Judgement, and then the Day of Judgment, and then Jannah and Nār. So we are going to be taking his part on Seerah as a primary source, and I will talk a little bit on why I have chosen Ibn Kathīr to be our primary source.

Source Two: Sahīh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah

The second book that I have used in the compilation of these notes is *Sahīh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* by Ibrāhīm Al-'Alï.

The Science of Seerah and the Science of Hadīth

Traditionally, Seerah was a separate science from Hadīth, even though there are some areas where they cross each other and where there is over-lapping between them, but traditionally Seerah had a different set of rules compared to Hadīth. Scholars of Hadīth were very stringent, very strict in their rules, while the scholars of Seerah were more liberal, more flexible. The reason is, when they were dealing with Hadīth and drawing *Ahkām* – rulings, they wanted to make sure that they were basing rulings on Ahādīth that are sound, they did not want us to worship Allāh based on weak sources, so that is why they applied very strict rules to Hadīth. However, when it came to Seerah, they were more flexible with the rules, because they saw this as history which does not affect Ahkām, it does not affect rulings, there is no Ahkām based on it. So Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, who is a scholar of Hadīth, says, "When we talk about history, we are more flexible". So you would find that the writers of Seerah would accept narrations that they would not normally accept if they were dealing with Hadīth. So that is one track that was followed by our early scholars. The Seerah of Ibn Ishāq was written according to these rules, the Seerah of Ibn Sa'd; all of these

early scholars of Seerah followed these flexible rules in narration. Recently, there was a new trend among some of our scholars; they wanted to apply the rules of Hadīth on Seerah. Why? These scholars said that now we are living in a time when the history of Rasūlullāh ﷺ is Ahkām for us. In the time of Imām Ibn Hanbal, Khilāfah was established, so when they studied the life of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, they were studying it to learn general lessons from it, but it was not to guide them in a methodology of a movement because Islām was already established. But now we need to go through the Seerah and learn rules from it on how to do Da'wah and how to establish Islām again, so it is becoming similar to Fiqh where it applies to us. Therefore they say we should apply the same rules of Hadīth on Seerah.

The second book, which is *Sahīh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah*, is based on the rules of Hadīth. So what these scholars did was they went into Bukhārī, they went into Muslim, they went into Sunan Abī Dāwūd, they went into these books of Hadīth and they gathered the bits and pieces that were referring to Seerah and they constructed a Seerah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ based on Hadīth. So rather than going to the book of Ibn Ishāq, they would go to Bukhārī, rather than going to Maqrīzī or Ibn Hishām or any other early scholars, they would go to Sahīh Muslim. Sa'īd Hawwā has written a book based on Hadīth, it is called *Al-Asās Fi As-Sunnah*, then there is this book we mentioned by Ibrāhīm Al-'Alï which is called *Sahīh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah*, and there are few other books that are following this line.

Reason for Choosing Ibn Kathīr as Primary Source

Now, the reason why I chose Ibn Kathīr as our primary source is because Ibn Kathīr combined both in one book, so he would draw information from the books of Seerah and he would also draw information from the books of Hadīth, so you would find him narrating from Bukhārī and narrating from Ibn Ishāq, and that is what makes the Seerah of Ibn Kathīr unique. There is one drawback with the Seerah of Ibn Kathīr, and that is it is a bit complicated and cumbersome to use, because he would mention all of the chain of narration, sometimes he would not stick to a chronological order, and sometimes he would bring in information that seems to be contradicting. But it is an excellent source, and

Alhamdulillāh, now it is present in the English language; it has been recently translated by Le Gassick, a professor in the US, and it is a very good translation.

Other Sources Used

Other books that we might and we might not be using, and some of them I have got some quotations from, but I just want you to be familiar with these books: We have *Al-Minhāj Al-Harakī* by Munīr Al-Ghadbān. The thing about this book is that the author tried to draw movement lessons from Seerah, so he would divide Seerah into the secret stage, the public stage, then he would go through the Hijrah and then different stages of Jihād, so he tried to construct a movement curriculum from Seerah. It is a recently written book. And then you have *Fiqh As-Seerah* by Muhammad Ghazāli ﷺ. The good thing about his book is that he has some *Tarbiyah* lessons. And there is also another book by the same name, *Fiqh As-Seerah* by Muhammad Sa'īd Ramadān Al-Būtī, and Al-Būtī emphasizes on Fiqh, he draws many Fiqh lessons from Seerah. And then there is a book called *Al-Ghurabā'* by Sheikh Salmān Al-'Awdah, and it is dealing with the Hadīth of *Tūbā Al-Ghurabā'* – the Hadīth of the Strangers, and he tries to draw correlations between the strangers in the time of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and the strangers now. *Al-Asās Fī As-Sunnah*, we talked about this by Sa'īd Hawwā. And then *At-Tarīq Ilā Al-Madīnah* by Muhammad Al-'Abdah, which is lessons drawn from Seerah. And *Fiqh As-Seerah* by Al-Būtī.

Arabic Terminologies

Some terminologies that I would like to go over before we start, because sometimes I have the habit of using Arabic words and I forget to translate them. So let us go through their translation now so that in case I forget to translate it, at least you know what they mean.

Sallallāhu ‘Alaihi Wa Sallam (ﷺ)	*Sallallāhu ‘Alaihi Wa Sallam* means May the peace and blessings of Allāh be on him. This is what we say when we hear the name of Muhammad ﷺ. Now, the Hukm of saying it is that it is mandatory to say it the first time you hear the name of Muhammad ﷺ, any other time after that, it becomes recommended. So in this lecture, the first time you hear the name of Muhammad, it is mandatory to say *Sallallāhu ‘Alaihi Wa Sallam*, any other time after that, as long as we are in the same gathering and meeting, it is recommended. So this is the Hukm of Salāh Wa Salām ‘Alā An-Nabï Muhammad ﷺ.
Rasūlullāh	The word Rasūlullāh means the Messenger of Allāh.
Jāhiliyyah	*Jāhiliyyah* – and this is a word that I would be referring to – is the ignorance of the pre-Islāmic era. So Jāhiliyyah is not only a time period, but it is also a concept. Whenever you have a time that resembles the pre-Islāmic era, it is called Jāhiliyyah. And you would find that Sayyid Qutub uses this word a lot in reference to the times that we are living in, he says that there is a lot of resemblance between it and the early Jāhiliyyah. So Jāhiliyyah comes from the root word *Jahal*, which means ignorance, so it is the time of ignorance, the absence of the Message. Even if the Message is there and the people are not following it, it is a Jāhiliyyah.
Īmān	Faith
Jannah	Paradise
An-Nār	Hellfire

The last section is discussing the difference between Hadīth and Seerah scholars. We talked about this; Hadīth scholars were more stringent in their narrations, fearing wrong rulings, Seerah scholars were less stringent, because they wanted to get the stories and were flexible in the narrations. And we

mentioned that we are using a combined approach, so I will use Hadīth, and in the situations where there is no Hadīth, we will fill in the gaps by referring to Seerah.

This is an introduction to the series. Inshā'Allāhu Ta'ālā, in the next session, we will start talking about some background history.

2

Background History

We talked about the importance of studying Seerah and now we will start with the first session on Seerah itself. Now, usually the authors or the scholars who write about the life of Muhammad ﷺ do not start by talking about his birth, they would go a little bit before that – actually, about a few thousand years before that – and they would talk about his father Ibrāhīm ﷺ; that is usually where they would start talking about Rasūlullāh ﷺ, they would talk about his ancestry starting from Ibrāhīm ﷺ. The emphasis is on the Hājar and Ismā'īl side of the story rather than the Ishāq and Sārah, because that is the lineage of Muhammad ﷺ. So they would start by talking about the story of Ibrāhīm ﷺ, Hājar and Sārah, when they travelled to Hijāz.

Lineage of the Prophet ﷺ

Ibrāhīm ﷺ Migrates with Family to Arabia and Leaves Them

Ibrāhīm ﷺ, his wife and his newborn son travelled into Arabia, into the land of Hijāz, and Ibrāhīm took them to present day Makkah. At the time there was nothing there; nobody was living there, there was no cultivation, it was a dead valley. But the place where the House of Allāh is built, the place where Al-Ka'bah was built, was sacred since the world was created. In fact, there is a difference of opinion on who was the first one to build Al-Ka'bah; the majority opinion is that it was Ibrāhīm ﷺ, but there are some scholars who say that Ādam ﷺ was the first one to build it. Now, regardless of whether Ibrāhīm ﷺ or Ādam ﷺ built it, the place itself – whether there was a building on it or not – was holy and sacred from day one. Ibrāhīm ﷺ and his wife and son arrived to the valley, and in the place where Zamzam is currently – obviously there was not Zamzam at the time – Ibrāhīm ﷺ left his wife and son Ismā'īl. He left with them some water and a leather bag of dates, and he walked away; he just turned away and left. Now, Hājar ﷺ knew that Ibrāhīm ﷺ was going to leave them, but she did not expect to be left in such a place, in the middle of the desert. So she followed him and she said, "Ibrāhīm, are you going to leave us in a place where there is no cultivation and there is no one living?" Ibrāhīm ﷺ did not answer back. She asked him again; no response. She asked him a third time; he did not answer back. And then Hājar ﷺ said, "*Āllāhu Amaraka Bi-hādhā?* – Did Allāh tell you to do so?" Ibrāhīm ﷺ said, "Yes." [She said], "Then Allāh will take care of us". If this is a command from Allāh, then I have trust in Allāh that He will take care of us. Look at the faith of this woman; [she is] in the middle of nowhere, but if this is the command of Allāh, I have trust in Allāh, Allāh will take care of us. "*Falam Yudayya'nallāh* – Allāh will not waste us. Allāh will not neglect us."

Ibrāhīm ﷺ left, and when he reached to a place where they could not see him anymore, Ibrāhīm ﷺ turned around and faced the place of Al-Ka'bah and he made Du'ā' to Allāh, Ibrāhīm ﷺ said: **Our Lord, I have settled some of my descendants in an uncultivated valley near Your sacred House, Our Lord, that they may establish Prayer. So make hearts among the people incline toward them and provide for them from the fruits that they might be grateful.**[6] So the place was known that it was secret, even though the Ka'bah

was not built, and then Ibrāhīm ﷺ made a Du'ā'. Now, you know, the Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, the pyramid – what is the foundation of the pyramid, the bottom? What is the first human need that needs to be satisfied? What does it start with? The first thing is what? Physiological needs, right? That is the bottom of the pyramid, so that is the most important need for humans, that is the base of the pyramid. And then what is after that? What is the next step? Psychological [needs]. And then the third? Social [needs]. Physiological on the bottom, [Psychological], Social, Spiritual, and then the peak itself; [Self] Actualisation – so that is the pyramid. First of all as a human being, you want to satisfy the physiological necessary needs which are food and shelter. After that, you want to have friends, have a social life, have a belonging and association, so those are the social needs. And then you have the spiritual needs. So after you have achieved the physiological needs and the social needs, after that you start thinking about religion according to Maslow. Finally, you have the Self-Actualisation which is on the top of the pyramid. But According to Ibrāhīm ﷺ the pyramid is inverted; the first thing that he asked for was not food and drink, or shelter, the first thing he asked for was ***Rabbanā Li-yuqīmus Salāh;*** that was the first thing he asked for. We would assume that since Ibrāhīm ﷺ left them in a valley where there was no cultivation, the first thing he would ask for is [for Allāh ﷻ] to provide his family with food for their survival, but Ibrāhīm ﷺ started in his Du'ā' by saying: ***Rabbanā Li-Yuqīmus Salāh*** **– Our Lord, that they may establish Prayer**. So the first thing that he mentioned was spiritual needs; Salāh, *Iqāmatus Salāh* – establishing the Prayers. And then he said: ***Faj'al Af'idatam Minan Nāsi Tahwī Ilaihim*** **– So make hearts among the people incline toward them**. Meaning make people love them. So he is asking Allāh ﷻ to draw people to his family and to make them love his family, so he is asking for the social needs. And then finally he said: ***Warzuqhum Minath Thamarāt*** **– And provide for them from the fruits**. So Ibrāhīm ﷺ is starting by asking for Salāh – spiritual needs, and then social needs, and then physiological needs. But even when he asked Allāh ﷻ to provide them with *Thamarāt* – fruits, he also connected it to 'Ibādah and said: **That they might be grateful**. So even when he was asking Allāh to provide them with worldly things, he was still connecting it to religion; **And provide for them from the fruits that they might be grateful**. And that is true Self-Actualisation, when Allāh becomes everything for you; when you are eating, when you are drinking,

when you are sleeping, you are doing everything for Allāh. That is the true tranquillity, and that is the Self-Actualisation that neither did Maslow or anyone else achieve except the Ambiyā' of Allāh and the Awliyā' of Allāh ﷺ.

Hājar ﷺ Searches for Water

And then Ibrāhīm ﷺ left. Hājar made use of the small amount of food that he left with them, but obviously after a short while they ran out of food. And Hājar ﷺ was breast-feeding Ismā'īl and her milk was drying up because she was thirsty and hungry, and now Ismā'īl ﷺ was beginning to cry, he was hungry. So Hājar ﷺ could not afford seeing her son agonising in pain, so she left him and she started climbing a hill, a hill which was called later *As-Safā*. She climbed on top of that hill to see if she could see anybody in the horizon; she would look left and right and would see no one, so she would climb down the hill, and when she would reach the valley, she would tuck up her clothes and run. And then she would climb another hill, which was later called *Al-Marwā*, and she would reach the top and look in the horizon to see if she could see anybody. Her son was twisting and turning in pain, and Hājar ﷺ was running up and down these hills, and she did that seven times. The seventh time when she reached the top of the hill, she heard a sound, and she was staring around to see where that sound was coming from, and to her amazement, she saw that the sound was coming from beneath the feet of Ismā'īl ﷺ. Jibrīl ﷺ descended and was digging the well of *Zamzam*, and the water was coming out from beneath his feet. Hājar ﷺ was rushing in happiness to the source of the water, and because it was a dry desert and it would soak up all of the water, she was making a pool around the water to contain it. Rasūlullāh ﷺ, when he was narrating this story, he said, "*Rahimallāhu Umm Ismā'īl* – May Allāh have mercy on the mother of Ismā'īl. If she would have left the water alone, it would have been a flowing river," but because of her interference, it was a well. She was trying to contain the water and she did not allow it to flow, if she would have left the miracle as it was going without interfering, it would have been a flowing stream. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ smiled and said May Allāh have mercy on her.

Hājar ﷺ – think for a moment what were her feelings when she was running up and down those hills; her heart must have been broken, she might have been crying because of the pain and suffering of seeing her son [possibly] die in front

of her eyes. Hājar was a believing woman, she was a righteous woman, and Allāh ﷻ was testing her, and Allāh ﷻ was hiding for her something in the future that she did not know. So at the time, naturally as a mother, she must have been in extreme pain, seeing her son crying and she was in the middle of nowhere running up and down these mountains. Now, just imagine if Hājar was resurrected at the time of Hajj, and she would have a chance to see what Muslims from all over the world are doing. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, when he was mentioning the story of Hājar going up and down As-Safā Wal-Marwā, Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "And that is why we go between As-Safā and Al-Marwā." So we are following the footsteps of Hājar ؑ, we are going up and down As-Safā Wal-Marwā to follow the footsteps of our mother Hājar ؑ. If Hājar knew that, if Hājar knew that a time will come when people will come from the four corners of the world to follow her footsteps in *millions* to do what she did, she would have went through As-Safā and Wal-Marwā with a big smile on her face. So dear brothers and sisters, as a Muslim, as a Believer, when you are going through these trials, you might have a certain mindset, you might have a certain feeling, but you do not know what is waiting for you on the other side, you do not know what Allāh is hiding for you in the future. This is the gift, this is the present, that Allāh ﷻ has given Hājar in Dunyā, just think about what Allāh ﷻ will give her in Ākhirah. So when we go through some difficult situations, when Allāh ﷻ puts us through trials and tribulations, let us always remember this, let us remember that Hājar went through this and Allāh ﷻ provided her with something better, that Allāh ﷻ was hiding something for her. Mūsā ؑ, when he was with his family, when he was lost in the desert, it was a cold, windy night, and Mūsā ؑ lost his way, he did not know [in] which direction was Egypt, and he saw a fire in the distance, so he told his wife, "I will go to that fire so that I can bring you with light and guidance." He wants to bring light because it was a dark night and he wanted to have some warmth in the cold weather, and he wanted guidance; he expected that since there was a fire in the desert then there must be some people there, it was a bonfire and there must be some people around it, so [he thought] I will go and ask them for directions; that was all that Mūsā wanted, he wanted some light for that dark night and he wanted guidance to Egypt, but Allāh ﷻ was hiding something better for him, Allāh ﷻ tells us the story in Qurān, when Mūsā ؑ went there he met Allāh, and Allāh spoke to him, and rather than Mūsā going back with light for that dark night and guidance to

Egypt, he came back with light for humanity and he came back with guidance not to Egypt, but to Jannah. He went there and that was the announcement of his Prophethood, it was right then and there. Mūsā ﷺ, lost in the desert, went to the fire, Allāh ﷻ told him: **Indeed, I am Allāh. There is no deity except Me, so worship Me and establish Prayer for My remembrance.**[7] Mūsā ﷺ wanted something but he got something better. The Sahābah ﷺ would go through difficulties but Allāh reserved for them the top levels of Jannah. So let us think about this when we ourselves go through moments of difficulties.

Hājar ﷺ Makes a Deal with the Tribe of Jurhum

Now, in the desert whenever you have a source of water, it will immediately attract forms of life, so now birds were beginning to hover over the well, because nothing was living there, it was a death valley. There was a tribe called Jurhum who were nomads in that particular area, and where did Jurhum come from? Jurhum was a tribe that moved out of Yemen. Yemen was the birthplace of the Arab people and the Arabic language, and that is where the Arab tribes emigrated from. And there were many mass immigrations that happened, or waves of immigrations that happened, from Yemen in different times, one of them [happened] when the dam was destroyed, and there is a whole chapter in Qurān called *Saba'*, which was the name of that kingdom. Allāh tells us the story that these were people who built the first dam in the world, and because of that dam they had a year-round source of water. So even though you do not have a lot of rain in Arabia, the precipitation level is low, but because of this dam they had a year-round source of water, and they had a massive network of irrigation that went for hundreds of miles. So suddenly you have this semi-arid area holding a *huge* population because of the existence of water. And there are some stories – they might be exaggeration – but it says that a woman would go out of her house and go for a walk with a basket on her head, and she would come back home and the basket would be filled with fruits; the fruits were just dropping from the trees. But it does say in Qurān that because of their wealth and the cultivation that they had, they did not feel any pain in travelling, because it was a continuous series of colonies; wherever they would go there would be villages and towns, and there was so much wealth, so they did not feel the suffering and the difficulty of travelling like the rest of the people of the world would. So these people, because of their arrogance and disbelief in Allāh,

they said, "We want to feel the pain of travelling like everyone else," and they asked Allāh, "O Allāh, make it difficult on us like everyone else," and Allāh did make it difficult on them. And they rejected the Message of Allāh, so Allāh destroyed the dam. The dam was destroyed and it flooded the area and suddenly all of their agriculture collapsed, so you had a huge wave of immigration which spread the Arab people out of Yemen into Najd and Hijāz and 'Irāq and Ash-Shām. So you had some tribes settling in A'mān, some of them settled in Najd, some of them settled in Hijāz, Al-Aws Wal-Khazraj settled in Madīnah, and then you have a few of the Arab tribes who went to Syria, and some of them went into 'Irāq. So that is how the Arab people spread out of their small locality in Yemen. I am giving you this background history because Jurhum was one of these tribes. However, Jurhum might have emigrated from Yemen before the [incident of] the Dam, Allāhu A'lam, but they are one of the tribes who ended up moving out of Yemen and they went into Hijāz. They were familiar with the area around Makkah and they knew there was no water in that area, so when they saw birds hovering in the sky, they wondered what was going on in that particular area, so they sent one or two people to go and investigate the matter. So these two men went and they came back and reported to their clan and told them that there was a well in that area. So now Jurhum go to the place where Zamzam is located and they ask Hājar a strange question and they get an [even] stranger answer. They asked Hājar, "Can we settle in this place?" Now, the reason why this question is strange is because this is a tribe of warriors, and here they were getting permission from a lonely woman with her child. If they wanted, they could have just pushed her away, but they were very kind to ask her for permission to stay there, even though it was an empty place, there was no one living there to start with. And her answer was even more amazing because she started to bargain and negotiate with them. Here you have a woman who is alone with no power and no strength, no weapons, no army to help her, and she is negotiating and bargaining with them and telling them: "Well, if you want to stay then I have a condition, and that is that the water belongs to us." You can stay here but the water is mine, the well belongs to me. They agreed. Rasūlullāh ﷺ says, "Deep in her heart she wanted them to stay from the beginning, because she wanted to have some company," but she was just negotiating with them to [get] a better deal. And she did, and they ended up settling in that area which later became known as Makkah.

Ismā'īl ﷺ Grows Up

Ismā'īl ﷺ grew up with them and he adopted their language, he learned their language which was? What was their language? Arabic. Because Ibrāhīm ﷺ, his language was? What was the language of Ibrāhīm? It was Aramaic from Irāq; Ibrāhīm ﷺ was from 'Irāq and they used to speak a different language in Irāq at the time. So Ismā'īl ﷺ was brought up by this Arab tribe and he adopted their language and he married a woman from among them. So this is the beginning of the lineage of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, through Ismā'īl ﷺ in Makkah. Now, Jurhum had the political leadership in Makkah. Later on Ismā'īl ﷺ grew up and his father came and they built Al-Ka'bah. The religious leadership in Makkah was with Ismā'īl and it continued down along the line of his descendants. So Jurhum never had the religious authority over Al-Ka'bah, it was always in the hands of the descendants of Ismā'īl ﷺ, but the political leadership was with Jurhum.

Khuzā'ah Fight Jurhum and Take Over Makkah

Jurhum stayed in Makkah for a very long time – two thousand years. They became corrupt, tyrannical, so Allāh ﷻ sent on them Khuzā'ah, and Khuzā'ah kicked them out of Makkah. This [Khuzā'ah] was another tribe that came out from Yemen and they settled in Hijāz, they went in and invaded Makkah and they kicked Jurhum out. Jurhum, before they left, they did two things; number one, they dumped the well of Zamzam; they filled it up, and they erased all of its marks. And [number two], they stole the treasures which were inside Al-Ka'bah. Khuzā'ah now became the new leaders of Makkah, while the descendants of Ismā'īl by that time had already increased in numbers and branched out and spread all over Arabia. But there was one branch that remained in Makkah, and that branch was Quraish. So Quraish is one of the many different tribes who descended from Ismā'īl ﷺ, they are called the descendants of 'Adnān. So Quraish were still living in Makkah but now Makkah was ruled by Khuzā'ah.

Qusaÿ Bin Kilāb Drives Khuzā'ah out of Makkah

One of the leaders of Khuzā'ah was 'Amr Ibn Lahī Al-Khuzā'ī, and we are going to talk about his story later on when we touch upon the religious background of Arabia, but now we want to stick to the lineage of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. The head of Quraish, Qusaÿ Bin Kilāb, was able to unify Quraish and to lead a revolt against Khuzā'ah, and he was able to drive them out completely from Makkah. So now finally, a descendant of Ismā'īl combined [both] the political and religious leadership of Makkah. Not only that, but Qusaÿ Ibn Kilāb consolidated all of the authorities, or all of the different aspects of power, in his hands. He controlled *Al-Hijābah* which was the guardianship of Al-Ka'bah, which was a very noble thing, so he was the guardian of Al-Ka'bah. He controlled *Siqāyah* and *Nifādah,* which is the provision of water and food to the Pilgrims. Now, to you this might not seem like a big deal; so what if he was providing food and drink to the Pilgrims? But to them this was considered to be *such* a great honour, that you are the one providing for the guests of Allāh, so they used to fight on this. What this responsibility entailed was that all of the Arabs who would come for Pilgrimage would be hosted by the people of Quraish, they would provide them with food [and water] throughout their stay in the season of Hajj. So Qusaÿ Bin Kilāb was also responsible for that. He also had control over *An-Nadwah*; An-Nadwah was the assembly of Quraish, it was like their parliament, [so] he held control over that. And he also held control over *Al-Luwā;* Al-Luwā is the banner of war, in other words, he was the one who had the power to declare war. So these were the authorities that Qusaÿ Ibn Kilāb had; basically he had every authority that existed in Makkah, so he was the absolute ruler of Makkah.

Hāshim Introduces Bread to the Pilgrims' Soups

When Qusaÿ Bin Kilāb died, these different aspects of authority were split among his children; some of them were with 'Abd Manāf and some of them were with his other brothers. The grandson of Qusaÿ, his name is 'Amr, he ended up inheriting from his father the provisions of Al-Hujjāj, providing them with food and drink. 'Amr did something new in feeding the Hujjāj; rather than providing them with soup – you know, they would cook the meat in big containers and then they would feed the people soup, because that way you can

feed a larger number – what ‘Amr did was he started crushing bread into the soup. So he would mix bread with the soup which was an upgrade to their meals, now rather than just having soup, they were having soup with bread. Now, the process of crushing the bread in Arabic is called *Hashm*, when you crush something it is called Hashm, so he was nicknamed Hāshim, so they nicknamed this man ‘Amr and they called him Hāshim, and this was the great grandfather of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. So he was named Hāshim because of crushing bread, that was not his real name, his real name was ‘Amr. Hāshim married from Al-Madīnah, and then he went to Falastīn to do business and he passed away in Ghazzah, he died and was buried in Ghazzah. His wife became pregnant and she gave birth to a child who was named *Shaybah*, Shaybah means old man. Now, why would anybody call a child Shaybah? The reason is [because] he was born with some grey hair, so they named him Shaybah. And because his father passed away, the mother stayed with her parents in Madīnah, and he was brought up by his family in Madīnah.

Al-Muttalib Takes ‘Abdul Muttalib to Makkah

One day a man comes into Madīnah, his name is Al-Muttalib, Al-Muttalib is Hāshim’s brother. He went into Madīnah and he went to claim his nephew, because Hāshim’s son Shaybah was living where? In Madīnah, so his uncle Al-Muttalib came to claim him when he was eight years old or something like that. He said, “We want to take him back to his land in Makkah.” The mother’s side of the family refused to give him up, but then Al-Muttalib was able to convince them by saying that he belongs to the most noble family in Quraish and he has to go back and learn about his heritage and learn about his family and start assuming responsibilities in Makkah. Eventually they agreed to allow him to go. So Al-Muttalib took with him this child into Makkah. Now, nobody in Makkah had ever seen this child before, and in those days slavery was quite rampant; you go out to the market and you buy a slave and you just walk in with that slave to Makkah. Since this boy was never seen in Makkah before, they assumed he was the slave of Al-Muttalib, so they called him ‘Abdul Muttalib, and this was the grandfather of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. So his real name was Shaybah, but he was nicknamed ‘Abdil Muttalib because they thought that he was the slave of his uncle. And usually they would buy slaves at a young age so that you would raise them up and train them to what you want them to do for you, so

they would usually purchase them when they were young. So they thought that he was a slave and he was named ‘Abdul Muttalib – the slave of Al-Muttalib. So this was the grandfather of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, so now we got as far as the grandfather of Rasūlullāh*;* we talked about Ibrāhīm and Ismā‘īl, we talked about Qusaÿ, and then we talked about Hāshim, [and] we talked about ‘Abdul Muttalib.

‘Abdul Muttalib and the Well of Zamzam

Now, we will spend some time talking about ‘Abdil Muttalib, because two important events happened to him, and we will talk about these two important events that had occurred with ‘Abdul Muttalib. Remember that the well of Zamzam was now unknown, right? Because Jurhum erased all of its marks, they filled it up and just erased all of its marks, so Zamzam had not been known now for over three hundred years, because Khuzā‘ah had rule over Makkah for about three hundred years, and then you add to that the time from Qusaÿ Bin Kilāb all the way down to ‘Abdul Muttalib, so we are talking about three hundred years plus, so the well of Zamzam was lost for over three hundred years. ‘Abdul Muttalib sees a dream; someone comes to him and tells him, “*Uhfur Taybah* – Dig Taybah.” Taybah means pure. ‘Abdul Muttalib in his dream is responding and saying, “What is Taybah?” He did not hear anything back. That was the end of the dream. The following night, the same voice comes to him and tells him, “*Uhfur Barra'* – Dig the precious.” ‘Abdul Muttalib asks, “What is the precious?” He does not hear an answer back. The third night the voice comes to him and tells him, “*Uhfur Zamzam* – Dig Zamzam.” ‘Abdul Muttalib asks, “And what is Zamzam?” The voice tells him, “Zamzam. It will never fail or dry up. It will water the grand Pilgrim. It lies between the dung and the blood. Near the nest of the crow with the white leg and the ant’s nest.” So it was symbols, and ‘Abdul Muttalib was unable to decode all of these symbols. “Zamzam, *Lā Tafna‘u Wa Lā Tudham* – it never runs out of water.” He heard a voice in his dream telling him that Zamzam will never run out of water. “*Tasqil Hajīj Al-A’lam* – And it will provide for the grand Pilgrim.” Meaning Hajj every year. And it will be sufficient to provide water for them. But then it goes on to saying, “*Baynal Fārsī Wad-Dam* – Between dung and blood.” And then [it says about the] crow with the white leg [and] nest of ants. All of these were obscure things to ‘Abdul Muttalib.

The next day ‘Abdul Muttalib was going around Al-Ka’bah and he saw dung and blood; there was a camel that was slaughtered in that place and they left its insides, and the blood was on the other side. And then he saw a crow with a white leg in the same area, and there was a colony of ants. ‘Abdul Muttalib realised that this is where the well of my grandfather is, so he calls his son Al-Hārith and they start digging. Now, Zamzam, for those of you who have been to Makkah, is not far away from Al-Ka’bah. So here you have ‘Abdul Muttalib and his son digging right next to Al-Ka’bah, obviously this would anger the people of Quraish, [they would think] what are you doing? You are digging right next to Al-Ka’bah. So they asked him, “What are you doing? ‘Abdul Muttalib continued working, and they kept on protesting and he was digging with his son Al-Hārith; at the time, ‘Abdul Muttalib only had one son. So they were digging and digging and digging and the people were wondering what is going on, what is this man digging for? What is he looking for? So they left him alone, and then suddenly they heard ‘Abdul Muttalib shout, praising Allāh ﷻ, and they came rushing, and to their amazement they found that ‘Abdul Muttalib had uncovered the rim of the well of Zamzam. So now all the leaders of Quraish came in and said, “Yes, this is the well of our grandfather Ismā‘īl, this belongs to all of us, let us share.” ‘Abdul Muttalib said, “Wait a minute, I was the one who saw the dream, I was the one who uncovered it, it belongs to me and me alone.” They said, “No way, we are all descendants of Ismā‘īl ﷺ so it belongs to all of us.” ‘Abdul Muttalib refused to give up, he refused, and they kept on insisting. So when they were unable to solve the dispute and they were about to go to war over it, someone suggested to them, “Let us solve the dispute by going to the witch of Banī Sa’d.” Banī Sa’d had a witch who claimed to have connection with the spirits, so [they said] let us go to her and seek her consultation. So they travelled to this witch and they were told that she had relocated and went to Syria. So they said, “Well, we will follow her, wherever she is!” And they started their journey towards Ash-Shām, and along the way they ran out of water, and they were in the middle of nowhere in the desert. ‘Abdul Muttalib told them, “If we are going to die here, let us at least dig our graves, and whenever one of us dies, the rest could put him in the grave and cover him, so at least in the end we will be left with one person who is uncovered rather than have all of us die exposed. At least let us honour our dead and just have one that is without burial.” So they all dug their graves and they were lying inside their

graves waiting for death. And then ‘Abdul Muttalib said, “This is not right, for men like us to sit here waiting for death. Let us do something, let us go and search for water.” So they agreed and they went in different directions searching for water. After a short while, ‘Abdul Muttalib found water, so they came to him and said, “If Allāh has saved you in this desert and provided you with water, and Allāh has shown you a dream in which you uncovered the well of Zamzam, this is surely an indication that it is a blessing for you and it belongs to you. We give up our claim, it is all yours. Let us go back.” So they gave it up and they agreed to submit to ‘Abdul Muttalib and the well was his. So this is one important story that happened with ‘Abdul Muttalib.

‘Abdul Muttalib and the Blood-Money

Now, when the whole incident happened, when they pressured, when they came to him and said, “This belongs to all of us,” ‘Abdul Muttalib felt that he was weak because he had only one son to defend him. You know, in tribal societies, your strength is based on how many men you have on your side, and you can only count on your relatives – that is how life in the desert is. Your strength is based on how many sons, how many men, you have with you, how many brothers, how many uncles – that is your strength. So ‘Abdul Muttalib felt weak, he had only one son on his side, Al-Hārith, so he said, “O Allāh, if You bestow me with ten sons, I will sacrifice one of them for Your sake.” And Allāh ﷻ did bless him with ten sons; he had ten sons and six daughters. So when he had ten, now it was time for him to fulfil his promise to Allāh that he will sacrifice one of them. So they had these arrows next to Hubal, Hubal was one of their large idols, and they believed that these arrows were divine, so they would cast lots and they would leave their choices, they would leave the decision up to this random way of casting lots. So ‘Abdul Muttalib had the name of every one of his ten sons on these arrows, so it came on who? ‘Abdullāh. He did it a second time; it came on ‘Abdullāh. Third time; it came on ‘Abdullāh. So ‘Abdul Muttalib took his son ‘Abdullāh with him right next to Al-Ka’bah and he was ready with a knife to slaughter him. Abū Tālib, one of the elder sons of ‘Abdul Muttalib, went to his father and said, “We cannot allow you to kill your son.” And then the maternal relatives of ‘Abdullāh came and said, “We are not going to allow you to kill our son.” And people were coming in and they were telling ‘Abdul Muttalib, “If you do it, then it will become Sunnah for the Arabs after

you," because ‘Abdul Muttalib was their leader, so if he did something, it would become a trend after that. And they said, "If you do it, then any one of us after that who has ten sons will follow your footsteps and we will be killing each other." They were already killing their daughters, and now they would start killing their sons. So they insisted on ‘Abdul Muttalib not to do it. ‘Abdul Muttalib told them, "This was a pledge that I made to Allāh, I cannot give it up, I cannot break my promise." They told him, "No, you have to stop it," and they had a dispute. How could they solve the dispute? "Let us go to the witch!" So they decided to go and visit the witch again. They went to the witch and they told her, "This is the situation," she said, "Alright, come back to me tomorrow so that I can consult my spirits this evening, tonight I will speak to the Jinn." They came back the next day and she had an answer for them, she told them, "What is the retribution that you pay to a person that was killed?" Diyah, the blood-money, "How much is it?" They said, "Ten camels." She said, "Then put ten camels on one side and put ‘Abdullāh on the other side, and cast a lot. If it points towards the camels, then slaughter the camels, if it points towards ‘Abdullāh, then add another ten camels." So they agreed and they went back. So ‘Abdul Muttalib, with all of the people of Quraish, came together, ‘Abdullāh on one side, the camels on the other side. They threw the arrows; it pointed towards ‘Abdullāh. They added another ten camels; it pointed towards ‘Abdullāh. They added another ten, so now we are up to thirty…forty…fifty…sixty, and it was pointing towards ‘Abdullāh – all the way until a hundred. They had a hundred camels on one side, ‘Abdullāh on the other side, and finally it pointed towards the camels. The people of Quraish said, "Finally, we can release your son." ‘Abdul Muttalib said, "Not yet, we will have to do it another time." They cast lots a second time, they cast lots a third time, and it was consistently pointing towards the camels. So he slaughtered the hundred camels, and he had to pay for it all. And ‘Abdul Muttalib was a very generous man; he refused to take any of that meat; he gave it out, and there was so much meat and the people would take so much of it but there was still enough to feed the birds and to feed the beasts. So later on it became famous among the Arabs that ‘Abdul Muttalib is the one who fed the humans and the animals; Mut‘im At-Tayr Fis-Samā' – he is the one who even fed the birds in the sky. And we will talk about an incident when this saying was brought up in a conversation with Abū Bakr and one leader of a clan.

Now, the people of the Quraish were right when they told ‘Abdul Muttalib, “If you kill your son, it will become a tradition among the Arabs after you,” because when ‘Abdul Muttalib sacrificed a hundred camels to save his son, the blood-money among them changed from ten camels to a hundred because of what happened with ‘Abdul Muttalib, so the retribution now that was paid was a hundred rather than ten. And by the way, this tradition was kept and reserved by Islām, so the Diyah is still today a hundred camels, however, now they would calculate it in terms of currency, but it is still based on that concept. This is the story of ‘Abdullāh.

Muhammad ﷺ – Son of the Two Sacrificed Ones

Now, ‘Abdullāh and Āminah are the parents of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Later on, they would tell Muhammad ﷺ that you are the son of the Two Sacrificed Ones. And who are they? Who are the Two Sacrificed Ones? Ismā‘īl and ‘Abdullāh. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ is the son of the Two Sacrificed Ones; his father ‘Abdullāh was sacrificed and his father Ismā‘īl ﷺ was sacrificed. ‘Abdullāh married Āminah Bint Wahb. And we are done with the ancestry of Rasūlullāh ﷺ.

3

Religious Background In Arabia

Inshā'Allāh, we will talk about the religious background of Arabia so that we know the environment in which Rasūlullāh ﷺ lived. Now, obviously they started on *Tawhīd* because of the Da'wah of Ismā'īl ﷺ; he was their Prophet and they followed him, so the Arabs of Arabia started out as Muslims, as Believers in the Oneness of Allāh. So what went wrong down the line for them to reach the level that they were at when Rasūlullāh ﷺ was sent to them? In the time of Rasūlullāh ﷺ there were three religions in Arabia; Idol Worshipping, Christianity and Judaism. So we will talk about how these three religions came into existence.

Idol Worshipping

'Amr Bin Lahī Al-Khuzā'ī – do you remember him? He was the leader of Khuzā'ah – this man was very generous, very strong, very much respected by his people. They used to respect him so much and admire him so much that his words were taken as law – *Kāna Qawlahū Yu'khaz Kash-Shara'*. 'Amr Bin Lahī Al-Khuzā'ī travelled to Syria, to Ash-Shām, and I am translating Ash-Shām as Syria even though it is not a correct translation. Ash-Shām refers to Syria, Falastīn, Lubnān, and Jordan; that land is called Ash-Shām, and the centre of Ash-Shām is Jerusalem – *Bait Al-Maqdis*, but it has been translated in English as Syria, so we will just go by that translation for now. So here we have 'Amr Ibn Lahī Al-Khuzā'ī travelling to Ash-Shām, to Syria. He goes there and he finds these idols, so he asks the people, "What are these?" So they told him, "Well, these are intermediates between us and Allāh – *Yuqarrimūna Ilallāhi Zulfah*." So when we want to ask for rain, we ask them; they appeal on our behalf to Allāh. When we want children, we would go to a different idol, when we want this we would go to that idol, in war we have a certain idol, and they appeal on our behalf to God and they perform things for us. 'Amr Ibn Lahī said, "Excellent! This is what we need. That is what we need; we need someone to appeal to our Lord to provide us with rain, to provide us with wealth. How about you hand me over one of these idols so I can take it back home?" So they gave him a pretty good idol – big, huge – called Hubal. So he carried Hubal with him back to Makkah and he established it next to Al-Ka'bah in Al-Haram, and he told his people, "These will intercede on your behalf to Allāh ﷻ, ask them whatever you want." Now, Makkah being the centre of Arabia, the religious authority of Arabia, bringing an idol to Makkah carried with it such a heavy weight. You had the Arabs coming from all over the Peninsula to make Hajj, so all of them were exposed to this new *Bid'ah* – innovation in religion, and it started spreading like a wildfire because it was coming from the religious centre, and it was also adopted by 'Amr Ibn Lahī Al-Khuzā'ī who was so respected by his people. So now it became a business; in Makkah they would make idols to export to the other tribes. So now every tribe would come to Makkah and they would carry with them an idol to take home because they could not come all the time and ask from Hubal, so they would have these idols that they would carry with them, and then this concept was developed further –

it starts out small and then it grows – the concept was carried further so now they were making portable idols; you carry it in your backpack, whenever you are travelling you have one with you.

I do not know if you remember the story of ʻUmar Ibn Al- Khattāb, he was once seen crying and laughing, so he was asked, "Why were you crying and why were you laughing?" He said, "The reason why I was laughing was because I remembered in the time of Jāhiliyyah, in the time of Ignorance, I was travelling and I wanted to pray, but then I remembered that I had forgotten to bring my God with me, so what I did was I tried to think of a way that I could pray. So I had some dates with me, so I moulded the dates into the form of an idol and I worshipped it. Later on that night I became hungry, so I ate my idol. " He said, "That is why I am laughing." You know, now he was looking back and he was saying, 'What was I doing? How could I do that?' You see how Islām changed them. See who was ʻUmar Ibn Al-Khattāb [before] and who he became after Islām. You know, these giants, the Sahābah, when we read about them and their wisdom, this is where they were. So this shows you how Islām had the power to change them from being nothing to being the best, how Islām transformed them in a very short period; that is a miracle! That is a miracle of Islām that it had the capacity to bring such a people, and to bring about in their lives such a change, and make out of them these giants. And ʻUmar Ibn Al-Khattāb, who would ʻUmar Ibn Al-Khattāb be without Islām?! ʻAbbās Mahmūd Al-ʻA'qād asked that question in his book about ʻUmar Ibn Al-Khattāb, he says, "Who would ʻUmar Ibn Al-Khattāb be without Islām?" He said, "Maybe he could have grown to be the leader of his clan, his family of Banū ʻUdaÿ who were a very small branch of Quraish, or maybe he could have been one of the prominent leaders of Quraish, or if we extend it further then he might have become the head of Quraish," which is a far-fetched assumption because the other clans of Quriash who held power in the past would never allow such a thing to happen to start with, so he said, "We would be stretching it too far to say that he would become a leader of Quraish. But the most likely scenario was that ʻUmar Ibn Al-Khattāb would have died at a young age; he used to drink a lot before Islām." So most likely he would have died at a young age and ʻUmar Ibn Al-Khattāb would have been an obscure figure of history. But with Islām, not only did he become a leader of Quraish or Arabia, but he became the ruler of two thirds of the world

at that time – one of the greatest men that ever lived in history. That is the transformation that Islām brought in their lives.

So idols were being exported and now they were being made in different shapes and forms, and you had a different idol for a different purpose, and Al-Ka'bah was polluted, surrounded with idols – three hundred and sixty idols were surrounding Al-Ka'bah. Shirk now was in every direction; what started out as one idol imported, turned into a huge exporting business and [with] Shirk in every direction in Makkah. So that is how the religion of Ismā'īl changed down the line. Rasūlullāh ﷺ says, "I have seen 'Amr Bin Lahī Al-Khuzā'ī dragging his intestines in Hellfire, because he was the first man to change the religion of the Arabs." So Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "I saw him in Hellfire going around his intestines, trying to pull them back in his stomach." So this is how idol worshipping was introduced in Arabia; what about the Jewish faith and Christianity?

Judaism

The King of Yemen, Tabbān As'ad, was traveling to do business in Ash-Shām. When he passed next to Al-Madīnah, he left his son in Madīnah to do business until he came back from Syria. The people of Madīnah killed him, [they] killed his son. So when Tabbān As'ad came back and heard the news that his son was killed, he decided to destroy Madīnah. So he attacked, and his army was overwhelming compared to the small armies of Madīnah, so he could have crushed his opposition, but two Jewish Rabbis came out of Madīnah. Now, how did Jews get there in the first place? When the Romans destroyed Jerusalem, the Jews dispersed. There were some of them who came down into Arabia in search of the Promised Land where the Nabï would be sent, because they had in their books signs of the Awaited Prophet, so they were looking for the place where he would emigrate to. They saw these signs in Madīnah and in a few other places, in Hajar and other places, and these are where the Jews settled, because these places had the resemblances or the signs of the place where the Prophet ﷺ would be sent, so that is why they settled in Madīnah, the three Jewish tribes; we had Banū Qaynuqā', Banū Nadīr, and Banū Qurayzah. So that is how they reached Madīnah, so they were ethnically Jewish [and] they emigrated when the Romans sacked Jerusalem.

So these two Jewish Rabbis came out and they went to Tabbān As‘ad and they told him, “This place is protected by God, if you attempt to destroy it, Allāh will destroy you,” and they were able to convince him. Tabbān As‘ad not only agreed to withdraw his army and stop attacking Madīnah, but he was also impressed by their religion and wanted to become Jewish himself, and then he invited these two Jewish Rabbis to go with him to Yemen, and they agreed, and he became Jewish. Now, on his way south heading back to Yemen, the tribe of Hawāzin had a problem between them and Quraish, Hawāzin had a problem with the people of Makkah, so they wanted to make a *Fitnah* – to start a division or cause a problem, between Tabbān As‘ad and [the people of] Makkah, and they had succeeded, so Tabbān As‘ad was contemplating attacking Makkah. Now, these two Jewish Rabbis told him, “This is another town that is protected by Allāh. You should not attack Makkah, in fact you should go into Makkah and make Tawāf around Al-Ka’bah.” Tabbān said, “Well, let us go.” They said, “No, we cannot join you.” [He asked,] “How come?” They said, “We are scholars, and it is not appropriate for us as scholars to go and make Tawāf around Al-Ka’bah when it is surrounded by idols.” So he went in and he made Tawāf, and Tabbān As‘ad was the first person ever to clothe Al-Ka’bah, he was the first one to clothe Al-Ka’bah. And he would clothe it once a year, and the way they would do it in the past is they would bring the new clothing and place it over the old, because they considered the clothing of Al-Ka’bah to be sacred and that they cannot take it off, so they would keep on piling up one cloth over another until the sheer weight of it was so heavy [that] eventually they decided that they were going to have to take it off and just place one clothing at a time. Tabbān As‘ad then went with these two Jewish Rabbis to Yemen and they were given freedom and encouragement to spread their religion among the Yemeni tribes, and many of the tribes in Yemen did embrace the Jewish faith. So you have two types of Jews in Arabia; you have ethnic Jews in Khaibar and Madīnah, but then you have Jews by conversion in Yemen. So the Jews of Yemen were ethnically Arab, but they adopted the Jewish faith. So you can see that at some moments of time, Jews did preach their religion, and now they might not do that, but there were points in history where they did preach their religion to others, and an example is Yemen. So that is how the Jewish religion was introduced into Arabia. What about Christianity?

Christianity

When ʻĪsā ﷺ was sent, some of his followers dispersed in the land and Christianity was dividing into many sects very early on, and very early on many of these sects became Disbelievers, there was *Dalālah* – misguidance, [which] was introduced very early on into the sects of Christianity. However, there were pockets of Believers here and there who were able to retain the true Christian faith that was preached by Sayyidinā ʻĪsā [or] Jesus ﷺ; believing in the oneness of Allāh, believing that ʻĪsā is the Messenger of Allāh rather than being the son of God – these were concepts that were retained by some of the Christians around the world. One of these men made it into Yemen and started preaching in the area of Najrān, and the religion was spreading, but secretly and privately and slowly. By that time, Tabbān Asʻad was dead, and the King of Yemen was his son Dhū Nuwās. News of this new religion reached to the King and he banned it and he persecuted the followers.

The King and the Young Boy

There is the story in Sahīh Muslim of the King and the Young Boy; many scholars would attribute this story to the events between Dhū Nuwās and the Christians in Yemen, they would say that the King was Dhū Nuwās, and that story is in Sahīh Al-Muslim, we will go over it. It says that the King used to deal with magic, and he had a sorcerer as his advisor. This sorcerer was growing old in age and he told the King, "I might pass away at any moment so I need to train someone to take my place, I need to inherit my skills to someone who would carry it on." So they tried to find a very bright and intelligent young man and they handpicked a young man and they assigned him as apprentice with this sorcerer. So the Boy was supposed to leave very early on in the morning from his house and go and study under the sorcerer and then come back home at night. Now, this Young Man, on his way towards the *Sāhir* – the sorcerer, saw a worship place, and he heard prayers coming out from this place which were different, so he decided to go and visit, and it was a church of Tawhīd – of unity of Allāh, preaching the true religion of ʻĪsā ﷺ. And he was very impressed by what he was hearing, but he was supposed to be studying with the sorcerer, so he asked the Priest, "What can I do?" The Priest told him, "When you leave home, visit me and come and study with me, and then go to the sorcerer, and if

he asks you how come you were late, tell him because my parents delayed me. On your way back, visit me, and when you get home, when your parents ask you how come you were late, tell them that the sorcerer delayed me." So you could take a class in the morning and take a class at evening. So he continued doing that for a while.

One day in the marketplace, a certain beast entered into the marketplace and caused chaos among the people and no one was able to deal with it. So this Young Man said, "O Allāh! Today I want to know whether the path of the Priest or the path of the Sorcerer is the truth, so O Allāh, show me the truth." And everyone was attempting to kill this beast and no one succeeded. And then this Boy picked up a rock and he said, "O Allāh, if the path of the Priest is the truth, then kill this animal." And he then threw the rock and it killed the animal immediately. He went back and reported this to the Priest, he told him what happened. The priest told him, "My son, today you have attained a very high status, therefore, you will be tested, you will go through trials." No one can reach such a high status without being tested by Allāh. [For example], in exams, the better the student the more difficult the exam should be, because you want to tell the difference between the levels of the students. So you have easy questions which everyone is able to answer, and then you have medium difficulty, and then you have difficult, and then you have very difficult, because you want to distinguish the A+ from the A-, you want to tell the difference. Same thing; Allāh ﷻ has brought us on this Earth for a test, and according to your level you will be tested. Rasūlullāh ﷺ says, "The ones who go through the most difficult tests are the Ambiyā', and then it goes down according to your level." So this priest was telling the Young Man, "You will be tested." And then he told him, "And when you are tested, do not disclose my name." Because the Priest was doing his Da'wah in secret and he did not want his name to be exposed. This was not out of fear; this was for security of the Da'wah. So he told him, "And when you go through trials, do not mention my name." And down the road you will see that the Priest was a very courageous man, because you might wonder, 'Oh, why is he saying do not mention my name? What is he afraid of? How come he cannot just go outside and say, 'Here, I am a Muslim,' and invite everyone openly? Why is he afraid? Why is he keeping it secret?' But we will see that the Priest was a very courageous man, but he was a wise man too.

The associate of the King was blind and he came to this young man to cure him, because now the Young Man had studied under the sorcerer, so now he was the expert, people went to him. So when he went to the Young Man, the Young Man told him, "I cannot heal you but Allāh can heal you. Allāh can do it." And he healed the man. So the blind who was now cured went to the King and the King asked him, "Who cured you?" The man said, "Allāh." The King said, "And do you have a god other than me?" The man said, "Yes, Allāh is my Lord and your Lord." The King tortured this friend of his and told him to disclose the name of the person who taught him this, and under the persecution, he gave up the name and said, "It is the Boy." Now they brought in the Boy and they started to torture him, and the Boy, under duress and pain, did give up the name of his teacher, the Priest. He could not sustain the pain and suffering that he was going through, so he disclosed the name. So now they brought the Priest, and they told the Priest to give up his religion, and he refused. So they brought a saw, and they placed it on top of his head, and they cut him into two, but he refused to give up his religion. This was the courage that he had, and this was the perseverance and the patience [that the Priest had]; he gave up his life, he was tortured brutally, but he never gave up his religion. And now they were left with the Boy, so the King ordered a group of his soldiers to carry this Boy and throw him from the top of a cliff. They carried the Boy, and Subhān'Allāh, Allāh was performing *Karāmāt* on the hand of this Boy. Karāmah is a miracle that would occur to a non-Prophet, and miracles [*Mu'jizah*] happen to the Prophets; that is the difference between Mu'jizah and Karāmah. Mu'jizah happens to a Prophet and Karāmah happens to a person who is not a Prophet, but they are both supernatural events. So this Boy made Du'ā' to Allāh and said, "O Allāh! *Ikfinīhim Bimā Shi't!* – O Allāh! Take care of them the way you want!" I am going to leave it up to you. O Allāh, take care of them the way you want. Allāh ﷻ made them reach the top of the cliff and then the cliff started to shake, and all of the soldiers fell down except he. And now the Boy was walking back and he entered into the palace of the King; here I am again. So the King appointed another group of soldiers to take him – obviously soldiers are disposable with this King – so he appointed a new group of soldiers to take him into a ship, and when they reached into the deep waters, [the plan was to] just throw him in the water. So they were on this boat and he made the same Du'ā' again, "O Allāh! Take care of them the way you want to!" The boat capsized

and they all drowned except he. He went back to safety. So he went to the King and the King was ready to appoint a third group of soldiers to take him, [but] the Boy told him, "Wait, you are not going to be able to kill me unless you do what I tell you." The King asked him, "What is that?" The Boy said, "You tie me to a tree, and you gather everyone, and you bring an arrow and you say, 'Bismillāh – the Lord of the Boy'. Then you will be able to kill me." So the Boy told him the prescription of how to kill him, and this is one of the many evidences given for the justification of what is referred to as 'suicide bombings'; this is one of the evidences that is given [to say] that it is allowed. Obviously there are restrictions on when it is allowed and where, but the concept itself of a person giving up their life for Allāh ﷻ is a valid one, based on this evidence and many others. Because he told the King how it was possible to get rid of him, if he had not, he would have survived; so he basically told the King how to kill him, but the Boy did it for a noble cause. What happened was the King followed the instructions and publicly said, "In the name of Allāh – the Lord of the Boy," and the arrow hit him right in his head and he immediately died, but the result of that action was that everyone who attended became Muslim. So he did it for Da'wah, he gave up his life so that everyone else would live, because a person is dead without Islām. The advisors of the King told him, "What you were afraid of has happened." The whole purpose of killing this Boy is to get rid of this religion, and here we are stuck with our whole nation becoming Muslim. Actually, in this situation Christian, but it is Islām, it is the oneness of Allāh ﷻ.

Dhū Nuwās instructed his soldiers to dig trenches. After they dug the trenches they would fill them with wood and ignite them, and anyone who refused to give up their religion they would force them into the fire. And they would bring a lot of people and burn them alive, and these were people who were holding firm to their faith and they did not give up. And then Rasūlullāh ﷺ says that there was a woman with her child in her arms, an infant, and she was walking towards the fire but then she hesitated. Imagine; a mother carrying her infant. So she hesitated for a while and then Rasūlullāh ﷺ says, "But the infant spoke and said, 'O mother, be patient, because you are following the true path.'" And she jumped in the fire. Rasūlullāh ﷺ says, "There are three who spoke in young age; this infant was one of them." This story was recorded in Sūrah Al-Burūj; Sūrah Al-Burūj is referring to this story. Sūrah Al-Burūj talks about the ones who were burned, *As'hāb Al-Ukhdūd* – the People of the Trench. Now, even though these

people were burned alive and they ceased to exist, and the King won, but Allāh ﷻ said that the Muslims were victorious. Now, that is interesting. These people were killed; *they* did not establish any Khilāfah, the King won. How come Allāh ﷻ said: ***Dhālikal Fawzul Kabīr* – That is the great attainment.**[8] Allāh ﷻ did not only call it victory, Allāh said that is the *great* victory. Why? How come these people lost in terms of worldly standards, nevertheless they are still called victorious? Victory in their regard is the fact that they were able to hold firm on their faith until the last moment, they never gave up – that is victory. Entering Jannah is victory. So even though they did not survive in Dunyā, but they were able to hold firm on to their religion. So the father of ʻAmmār Yāsir has won, Sumayyah has won, Hamzah Bin ʻAbdul Muttalib, even though he was killed in the battlefield, he has won; they have won in the eternal sense of winning, even though they might have lost in a temporary battle in Dunyā, but the eternal battle, they have won it, because they have entered Jannah and Allāh ﷻ says: ***Dhālikal Fawzul ʻAzīm* – That is the great attainment**.[9]

An-Najāshī Sends Army who Defeat Dhū Nuwās

There was one person who survived, and this person travelled all the way to visit the Roman Emperor. Now, he went to the Roman Emperor because the Roman Emperor was Christian. Even though these two people would be from different Christian sects – because by that time the Romans might have already adopted the trinity and the divinity of ʻĪsā – but they still considered themselves to be followers of ʻĪsā. So he went to seek help from the Roman Emperor, he said, "This is what happened to us, we were persecuted, we were killed. We need your help." The Roman Emperor said, "We are too far from Yemen, but what I could do is send a message to the *Najāshī* – the Negus of Abyssinia, who is also a Christian, and he can help you." So the Roman Emperor did that, and they sent a message to An-Najāshī, in English the Negus, and he sent an army led by a general named Aryāt. And Aryāt invaded Yemen and fought with Dhū Nuwās, and Dhū Nuwās, when he lost, he committed suicide; they say that he was on his horse and he just jumped into the Red Sea and killed himself. So he lost, and now the Abyssinians were ruling over parts of Yemen, and they did this as a revenge for the Christians who were killed by the Jews of Yemen.

Aryāt and Abrahah Fight

Aryāt ruled over Yemen for a while and he was very strict. One of his army generals staged a revolt against him, and the Abyssinians in Yemen were divided now; a group of them were with Aryāt and the other group were with the new leader called Abrahah, and they were fighting. Aryāt told Abrahah, "If we kill each other, the people of the land will take over, so how about we have a one-on-one fight? A man-to-man; me and you." Abrahah agreed, but Abrahah made a secret agreement with some of his security guards that if you see me winning leave me alone, but if you see that I am losing then jump in and help. So you had all of these people surrounded, and Abrahah and Aryāt were in the middle. Now, Aryāt was described as a tall and thin man and Abrahah was short and chubby. So Aryāt was able to strike Abrahah from the top and he chopped off his nose, so Abrahah was called *Abrahah Al-Ashram*, Ashram means his nose is chopped off. When that happened, the bodyguards jumped in and they killed Aryāt. He betrayed him; obviously this is against the rules, but the issue was over now, Aryāt was dead.

Abrahah Marches with Army to Destroy Al-Ka'bah

Abrahah now took over and he was the one who was ruling over Yemen. Abrahah wanted to change the religion of the people and force them to become Christian, and since the Arabs were attached to Al-Ka'bah, he decided to build a counterpart to Al-Ka'bah in San'ā' in Yemen, so he built a *huge* cathedral called Al-Qullais, and this [building] was described as a wonderful piece of art; huge, great. He had access of wealth from Abyssinia so they built this huge cathedral in San'ā' to complete with Al-Ka'bah. Now, one man did not like this idea, what he did was a bit crude; he went into Al-Qullais and he defecated, and then not only that, but he took his stool and he spread it all over the walls – imagine stool all over the walls – and he ran away. Abrahah was furious! What is this guy doing?! He was so angry that he decided that he must get rid of Al-Ka'bah; I am going to put an end to this and destroy Al-Ka'bah. He mobilised an army and marched towards Makkah. There was some resistance along the way; one of the chiefs of a tribe whose name was Nufayl put up some resistance, but he was defeated [as] Abrahah had a huge powerful army, and they captured Nufayl as a prisoner of war. When Abrahah reached to At-Tā'if, the people of At-Tā'if

assisted Abrahah and one of them offered to be a guide for Abrahah for the rest of the journey, and this man's name was Abū Rughāl. So Abū Rughāl went out with the army, but then immediately when they got out of At-Tā'if, he died. So then the Arabs were so upset with Abū Rughāl[10] that they built in place of his death a monument that they would stone because of his betrayal. Anyway, Abrahah made it to the outskirts of Makkah, and there were some shepherds with camels grazing; he took possession of them. Two hundred of these camels belonged to 'Abdul Muttalib, the grandfather of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, so 'Abdul Muttalib came out of Makkah to meet with Abrahah. Now obviously with Abrahah you could not just walk in and meet him, he was such an important figure, so 'Abdul Muttalib had to have some connections to get in. 'Abdul Muttalib happened to be a friend of Nufayl who was captured as a prisoner of war. Nufayl was carried with the army, and he became friends with a man called Unais, and this man Unais was such an important person in the army, he was the pilot of the elephant which was their most valuable piece of equipment. So Nufayl now was very well-connected, he knew Unais. So 'Abdul Muttalib came to Nufayl and told him, "I want to meet with Abrahah," and Nufayl told him, "Sure, I will arrange for you a meeting through my friend Unais." So Unais arranged a meeting with Abrahah, and Abrahah welcomed 'Abdul Muttalib.

'Abdul Muttalib Meets Abrahah

'Abdul Muttalib walked in, and 'Abdul Muttalib was described as being a man with a very strong presence; by just seeing him a person would become impressed, be in awe. So when 'Abdul Muttalib came in, Abrahah held him in high esteem, even though they did not even talk yet. Now, the rules were that Abrahah sits on a very high throne and people sit under his feet, so [if] you come and have a meeting with Abrahah you were sitting under his feet. Abrahah, when he saw 'Abdul Muttalib, he did not feel comfortable at all having 'Abdul Muttalib sit under him, but he could not also allow 'Abdul Muttalib to sit with him on the throne because nobody should sit on the throne except he, so what he did was he came down from his throne and sat with 'Abdul Muttalib on the floor, and he told the interpreter to ask 'Abdul Muttalib what does he need. 'Abdul Muttalib straight ahead told the interpreter, "Abrahah has taken possession of two hundred of my camels, I want them back." Abrahah responded and said, "When I saw you, I had so much respect for you, but I have

lost it all. I am coming to destroy your honour and the honour of your fathers, I am coming to destroy the centre of your livelihood, I am coming to destroy Al-Ka'bah, and you are asking me about camels?!" 'Abdul Muttalib responded and said, "I am the owner of the camels, so I am responsible for them, and this House belongs to Allāh, and Allāh will protect it." I am here to ask for what is under my authority, my responsibility; the House belongs to Allāh, Allāh will take care of it and Allāh will protect it. Abrahah said, "Give him back his camels."

Abrahah's Elephant Refuses to Move

'Abdul Muttalib went back to Makkah and he told the people of Makkah, "Do not fight. Withdraw out of Makkah." 'Abdul Muttalib gave them clear instructions; we are not going to fight Abrahah, we are going to leave. And they all went up to the mountains, and 'Abdul Muttalib was the last one to leave, and before he left, he was was hanging on to the handle of the door of Al-Ka'bah and he was praying to Allāh ﷻ to protect this House, and then he left. So everyone had evacuated Makkah and Abrahah now issued his instructions to march forth, but the elephant refused to move. They turned the elephant to a different direction, he would stand up [and start] running; they turned him towards the direction of Makkah, he would sit down. How come? A miracle from Allāh, but it is said in the story that this man Nufayl who was a prisoner of war, released himself from his chains and he jumped to the ear of the elephant and he said to the elephant, "This is the House of Allāh, do not attack it," and he ran away. But whether that was the reason or not, the elephant refused to march in the direction of Al-Ka'bah. And they would beat it, they started poking it with their spears and the elephant was bleeding, but it refused to move. Eventually they decided that they were going to have to leave the elephant, and they made their move forward.

Allāh ﷻ Sends Birds to Destroy Abrahah and His Army

Allāh ﷻ sent on them an army. No one knows the soldiers of Allāh, anything can be a soldier of Allāh; water, which is the source of life, can be a soldier of Allāh; water is what killed the tyrant Fir'aun. Wind is a soldier of Allāh. Allāh ﷻ says: **And none knows the soldiers of your Lord except Him.**[11] So Allāh ﷻ

sent an army of birds, every bird carrying with it missiles, that were sent on the army of Abrahah and destroyed them all, they were all killed. And this event was recorded in Sūrah Al-Fīl: **Have you not considered, [O Muhammad], how your Lord dealt with the Companions of the Elephant? Did He not make their plan into misguidance? And He sent against them birds in flocks. Striking them with stones of hard clay. And He made them like eaten straw.**[12]

These are the events up to the year in which Rasūlullāh ﷺ was born. Rasūlullāh ﷺ was born in the Year of the Elephant.

4

Early Life Of Muhammad ﷺ

Situation around the World before the Birth of Rasūlullāh ﷺ

The situation in Arabia and around the world was very desperate, and for more information in that regard, you could refer to an excellent book written by Sheikh Abul Hasan Nadawī called *Mā Dhā Khasar Al-A'lam Bi-Inhitāt Al-Muslimīn? – What has the World Lost by the Downfall of the Muslims?* And he has a whole chapter in his book talking about the situation in the world at the time of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Over here we just have the situation in Arabia, but over there he talks about the sitation in the Persian Empire, China, India, Roman Empire – all around the world. And it was in a very desperate state, it needed the light of Prophethood. It was not entirely evil; [some] people around the world still retained some good qualities, and Al-Būtī talks about some of the good qualities that the Non-Believers of the Arabs had in the time

of Muhammad ﷺ, and he mentions a few examples like generosity and hospitality, fulfilling of a pledge, pride and denial of shame and injustice, firm will and determination, perseverance and deliberateness, a pure and simple life; so these are some aspects that were taken advantage of by Islām. You see, the Sahābah رضي الله عنهم, because they held these qualities, they were successful in spreading the religion, their generosity and hospitality made them welcome in the nations they would go to; people around the world would welcome the Sahābah رضي الله عنهم, they were not like a despised occupier; the Sahābah were welcomed in the lands they went to, the people saw them as a liberating army that would free them from slavery and the servitude that they were going through. This held true for example when it came to the people of Egypt and the people of Syria who were ruled by the Romans; they did not see the army that was coming in as displacing another occupying army, no, they saw them as people who were liberating them. And then there was something among the Sahābah رضي الله عنهم; they did not care for power and authority. In many places they would go, they would train among the local people leadership, and then they would hand it over to them. The Sahābah were out to call people to Islām, not to rip their resources like we had in the colonial era of Europe and the imperial powers of Europe; France, Britain, Italy, Holland. These European powers went all over the world taking advantage of the people and stripping them of their wealth; that was not the case with the armies of As-Sahābah رضي الله عنهم. Their fulfilment of pledges, their firmness and determination; they were strong, you could count on them, they were powerful, when they gave a word, they would stick to it. So these were qualities that were very important for Da'wah, and that is why Allāh ﷻ chose that particular area to host the last Message. It was not a haphazard thing that Allāh ﷻ chose Makkah to be the birthplace of Rasūlullāh; the people in that area at that time had qualities which made them the fittest to carry the Message, and they pledged their lives for it, and they gave their lives; they sacrifice everything for Islām.

Birth of Rasūlullāh ﷺ

Anyway, we talked last time about the story of the Elephant – Al-Fīl. Rasūlullāh ﷺ was born in 'Aam Al-Fīl, he was born in the year in which Allāh ﷻ destroyed the army of Abrahah. There are many stories mentioned referring to the birth of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, miracles that happened, and you could go into other books to

study these stories. We are not going to go through them for the simple reason that I am trying to stick to a certain standard of narration, and these stories are usually weak. Rasūlullāh ﷺ, when his mother Āminah was pregnant, ‘Abdullāh, his father, was on a journey to Ash-Shām, but he ended up dying close to Madīnah and he was buried there, so he died before the birth of Muhammad ﷺ. Rasūlullāh ﷺ was born, and his mother saw a light that was coming out of her, and this light was reaching towards Ash-Shām, and that was interpreted as the light of the Message of Muhammad ﷺ reaching to the world. There are a few Ahādīth that we will state, but first of all, Allāh ﷻ says: **Allāh is most knowing of where He places His message.**[13] So Allāh ﷻ chose the best to be His Messenger – Muhammad ﷺ.

I am the best of you, both in clan and in spirit

Now, Imām Ahmad narrates a Hadīth that people were talking different things about Muhammad ﷺ, for example, they said that Muhammad ﷺ was like a green tree growing in a desert. What they were trying to say was that Muhammad ﷺ was the only good person among his clan. So Ibn ‘Abbās says, “Certain things the people were saying reached the Messenger of Allāh, so he mounted the pulpit and asked, ‘Who am I?’ They replied and said, ‘You are the Messenger of Allāh.’ He replied, ‘I am Muhammad Bin ‘‘Abdillāh Bin ‘Abdul Muttalib.” Meaning I am Muhammad, son of ‘‘Abdillāh, son of ‘Abdul Muttalib. [He continued], “‘Allāh devised the creation and made me part of His best creatures. He made them all into two groups, placing me in the better of them. He created the tribes, subdivided them into clans, and placed me in the best one. I am the best of you, both in clan and in spirit.’” Rasūlullāh ﷺ was saying that I am not a good person among a group of evil people, he said [that] I am the best but I am also from among the best, so my clan and my tribe are the most noble. Rasūlullāh ﷺ also says, “Verily Allāh granted eminence to Kinānah from amongst the descendants of Ismā‘īl, and He granted eminence to the Quraish from among Kinānah, and He granted eminence to the Banī Hāshim among Quraish, and He granted me eminence from the tribe of Banū Hāshim.” So Rasūlullāh ﷺ was the greatest from among Banū Hāshim, and Banū Hāshim were the most noble among Quraish, and Quraish were the most noble among Kinānah, and Kinānah was the most noble of the descendants of Ismā‘īl.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ is a Product of Marriage Right from Ādam ﷺ

Now, Rasūlullāh ﷺ says in another Hadīth, "I was the product of true marriage, not fornication, from Ādam right on up to when my father and my mother had me. I was not at all tainted by the fornication of Jāhiliyyah." In the time of Jāhiliyyah, because of the corruption and lewdness that occurs when people are far away from the true Message, their hearts become perverted, and a lot of immoral acts occur among the people. Rasūlullāh ﷺ is saying [that] even though part of my ancestry lived in those times, but I was a product of marriage all the way up to Ādam, so there is not any of my ancestors who had a relationship of *Zinā';* it is all through marriage all the way to Ādam ﷺ, and that is something that Allāh has granted to Muhammad ﷺ, it was all through true marriage. I hope the meaning of this is clear that the lineage of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, from him all the way up to Ādam ﷺ, was a product of marriage.

Names of Rasūlullāh ﷺ

Muhammad

The famous names of Muhammad ﷺ that we know are Muhammad and Ahmad, but he has some additional names, and we will talk about the meanings of these names. The name that was given to him by his family[14] was Muhammad ﷺ, and who was the one who named him Muhammad? Who was it? His grandfather; 'Abdul Muttalib was the one who named him Muhammad ﷺ. Now, the name Muhammad means to be eternally praised, for he ﷺ obliges praise from people for his characteristics, his sayings, his actions, and he is the embodiment of praise and he is therefore Muhammad. So Muhammad means a person who draws praise. Muhammad ﷺ, as we mentioned earlier, is praised eternally. Allāh ﷻ has fulfilled the meaning of his name. There is no human being who ever lived in history who was praised like Muhammad ﷺ; he is praised day and night.

Ahmad

The name *Ahmad* comes from the same root, you see, Muhammad and Ahmad come from the root *Hamd*, amd what does Hamd mean? Praise. When you say Alhamdulillāh, [it means] praise be to Allāh. So both the names Muhammad and Ahmad are derived from the same root. Muhammad means a person who draws

praise, so he is praised, Ahmad means that he praises Allāh. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ is the most among us in praising Allāh ﷻ. So there is no person that ever lived [or lives] who praises Allāh ﷻ like Muhammad ﷺ. So here you have two meanings; Muhammad means he is the most praised, Ahmad [means] he praises Allāh the most. These are the two famous names of Muhammad ﷺ.

Al-Hāshir

But he has also told us some of his other names, and these are from Ahādīth. One of his other names is *Al-Hāshir*. Al-Hāshir means 'the gatherer to whom humanity will be resurrected in his wake'. The Prophet ﷺ is the first to be resurrected among the creation, then mankind will be resurrected following him. So the first person to be resurrected will be Muhammad ﷺ and then people will come after that, so he is the first on the Day of Judgement.

Al-Muqaffī

Al-Muqaffī – The Successor, for he ﷺ is the last of the Prophets and Messengers and there shall be none succeeding him. So Muhammad ﷺ is the last, Al-Muqaffī is the last.

Al-Māhī

Al-Māhī – The eraser who erases and eradicates Kufr. There is no Prophet who will succeed in eliminating Kufr entirely except Muhammad ﷺ. Now, that mission has not been fulfilled yet because his Ummah are still carrying on that mission, but the eventual victory of Islām, which will be the culmination of human history, will be a moment of time when the whole world will be Muslim, and that will be carried on by the Ummah of Muhammad ﷺ under the leadership of 'Īsā ﷺ – Jesus, may peace be upon him. So Muhammad ﷺ is the one who will be successful in eradicating [and] erasing Kufr from the face of the Earth. So he is called Al-Māhī, he will erase and eradicate Kufr.

Nabïyyun Malhamah

One of his other names is *Nabïyyun Malhamah* – The Prophet of the Fierce Battle. Now, Malhamah is a fierce battle and it is also a series of battles. Rasūlullāh ﷺ was named The Prophet of Malhamah, the Prophet of Fierce Battles, [and] one can give different interpretations to that. One meaning is that his Ummah are the greatest in terms of Jihād; there is no Ummah that has fought

Jihād like the Ummah of Muhammad ﷺ; that is one meaning. Another meaning that could be drawn from this name of Rasūlullāh ﷺ is that the future of humanity, after Muhammad ﷺ, will be that of very fierce battles, and we have seen examples of that in World War One and World War Two. History is divided into stages; we are now living in the stage of Muhammad ﷺ which extends until the Day of Judgment. So events that are happening now, even though they might not be done by Muslims, but we are still living in the era of Muhammad ﷺ, and everyone living on the face of the Earth is part of the Ummah of Muhammad ﷺ in the sense that he is their Prophet. Now, whether they accept it or not is a different question, but they are part of his Ummah, and they will come on the Day of Judgement and will they be asked about who? They will not be asked about ʻĪsā, they will not be asked about Mūsā, they will be asked about Muhammad ﷺ – did you follow him or not?

Infancy of Rasūlullāh ﷺ

Umm Ayman Nurses Rasūlullāh ﷺ

Rasūlullāh ﷺ was nursed initially by his mother and Umm Ayman, whose name is Barakah, and Umm Ayman was an Abyssinian woman who lived in Makkah. She later on became Muslim, and Rasūlullāh ﷺ married her to his emancipated slave, Zayd Bin Hārithah. Zayd Bin Hārithah was a slave and Rasūlullāh ﷺ freed him and he married him to Umm Ayman. So she also nursed Rasūlullāh.

The Arabs would send their Children to Grow Up in the Desert

It was a tradition among the urban Arabs to send their children to grow up in the desert. They used to believe that the desert was more pure and had a cleaner environment and was healthier for them to grow in. They also believed that this would strengthen their character; because of the harshness, it would make them stronger people. So they would send their children out of the cities to live in the desert, and that happened with Rasūlullāh ﷺ, he was brought up in the land of Banū Sa'd.

Halīmah Accepts Muhammad ﷺ

Halīmah Sa'diyah narrates to us this story, she says that she came with her friends to Makkah so that they could take with them children to nurse, and for them this was something that they were paid for. So you would have these Bedouin women come into Makkah and they would try to adopt or nurse some children. Halīmah Sa'diyah came into Makkah and she said that that particular year was a year of famine, so they were very poor. Now, she and her friends went around the houses of Makkah searching for children who needed to be nursed. She said that Muhammad ﷺ was presented to each and every one of them and they all declined to accept him, they all refused to accept Muhammad ﷺ. Why? Because he was an orphan. And they were saying, "What good is an orphan? Who will pay us if his father is dead?" So they would not agree on a certain amount of money, what they would do is they would nurse the child and then they would be given some financial compensation as a gift. Since Muhammad ﷺ was an orphan, no one accepted him because he did not have a father to pay for him, and they said that his mother would not really be able to pay us much, so they all declined to accept Muhammad ﷺ. Halīmah says, "At the end of the day, all of my friends were going back to their camps with children except myself, I found no one to take with me. So at night I told my husband, 'I am going to go next day in the morning and accept that child called Muhammad since we have no one else, I am not going to go back home empty-handed.'" She said, "My husband agreed. So I went next day in the morning and I went to Muhammad's mother, Āminah Bint Wahb, and I said that I accept to take your child."

The Blessings of Muhammad ﷺ become Apparent

Halīmah says, "The night before, we could not get any sleep, because our camel was not providing any milk. And because of the famine and the hunger, I was not able to provide my own child with milk. So he would cry throughout the night and keep us awake." That was their situation; very poor. Halīmah says, "As soon as I picked up Muhammad ﷺ and took him back to my camp, my breast immediately welcomed him and provided him with all the milk that he needed until he was satisfied, and the milk was enough for my son, and that was the first night that we were able to get a full night of sleep, because my son was

not able to sleep for quite a few nights." So immediately the Barakah of Muhammad ﷺ was apparent. She said, "And then my husband went out to milk the camel and it was providing so much milk that my husband came back and said, 'O Halīmah, you have brought us a blessed soul.'" There is something going on. All of these blessings are showering us since you brought this young child in our house.

So now they were still camping in Makkah, and they were ready now to go back to the desert. Halīmah says, "When we were coming to Makkah, I was riding a donkey that was so old and weak it was slowing down the whole group and it was annoying everyone else." She said that this donkey was old and weak; you know, sometimes you would have a donkey which rather than going straight it would go sideways – very tired and disoriented! She said, "When we were going back, my donkey was the fastest among the group." She said, "My friends were asking me, 'Is this the same animal you brought with you when we came to Makkah?'" She said, "Yes." They said, "By Allāh, something is going on."

Now they went back to their land. Halīmah said, "Me and my husband would send out our goats to graze; they would come back full and we would milk them whenever we wanted, while everyone else in our tribe, their animals would be hungry without any milk." Now, people were starting to to complain to the shepherds telling them, "Why do you not go and graze the animals in the same place where Halīmah is grazing hers?" She said, "So they would take their animals after us following us to the same place, yet, ours would come back full and theirs would come back empty." And she said, "The child was growing up and we were seeing the blessings of Allāh on all of us because of him." There is a statement here where she says, "And God went on blessing us this way and we recognised it. Then he reached two years of age, he was already growing up a very fine boy, not like the other children. I swear that by the age of two, he was a sturdy boy. So we took him to his mother."

Time for Muhammad's ﷺ Return to his Mother Āminah

When he was two years old, now it was time for them to return the child – that was it. And Subhān'Allāh, it seems that the Arabs of Makkah learned that the city is not a very healthy environment, especially with Makkah, because it received a lot of visitors from all over Arabia; you know, they could bring with

them different diseases and germs into town. But the desert is very pure; the desert is hot and dry, and that makes it an unsuitable environment for the growth of bacteria, and it would be a very healthy place to be. So now at the age of two it was time for them to return Muhammad ﷺ to his mother.They went to Makkah, they told Āminah, "We want to keep Muhammad with us." You know, it is not good for him to be in Makkah and it might be dangerous; they were bringing up all of these excuses, they wanted to keep Muhammad ﷺ, they loved him so much, they knew that he was blessed. They wanted to keep him and they kept on trying and trying and trying until Āminah agreed. Subhān'Allāh, that was the blessing of Allāh following Muhammad ﷺ. She eventually agreed, so they took him back with them.

One day Muhammad ﷺ was playing with his foster-brother, so his foster-brother came in rushing and said, "My brother from Quraish!" They asked, "What happened to him?" He said, "Two men dressed in white came down and knocked him to the ground and then they opened up his chest[15]." So Halīmah said, "Me and his father went rushing, and we came to see Muhammad ﷺ, his colour was pale, and we asked him what happened, he said, 'Two men came and they opened my chest, and they took out something from it.'" Halīmah, she loved Muhammad ﷺ so much, and she did not want anything to harm him, plus she did not want anything bad to happen to him when he was with her. So she rushed back to Makkah and went to Āminah and said, "Here is Muhammad, you can now have him. We have fulfilled our responsibility." Āminah said, "How come you are bringing him back when you were so interested in keeping him?" They said nothing. She insisted, she said, "Tell me what happened. You were so insistent on keeping him and now you want to bring him back? What happened?" Halīmah said, "She kept on questioning us until we eventually told her." Āminah responded and said, "Are you afraid for him that Satan might hurt him? By Allāh, that will not happen. When I was pregnant with him, it was the lightest pregnancy, and when I delivered him, his birth was unlike any other child, and when he came out, I have seen light that was reaching to Ash-Shām. So the protection of Allāh is with him, and I am sure that he will have a great future." So now Muhammad ﷺ was back with is mother [Āminah].

Āminah and ‘Abdul Muttalib Pass Away

His mother passed away when he was at the age of six, so now he lost his father and mother. He was adopted by his grandfather ‘Abdul Muttalib who raised him up, and ‘Abdul Muttalib passed away when Muhammad ﷺ was at the age of eight. And Muhammad ﷺ was then taken care of by his uncle Abū Tālib, who protected him and helped him and supported him for the next forty years in the life of Muhammad ﷺ.

This is the early years of Muhammad ﷺ. We will talk about a few important events here and there that happened before Prophethood; we are not going to spend much time on the pre-Prophethood era, but we will talk about the important events that happened.

Events Pre-Prophethood

Rasūlullāh’s ﷺ Prevention from Attending Parties

Rasūlullāh ﷺ was protected by Allāh, he would not commit sins which were usual and normal amongst his people; Allāh ﷻ was keeping him away from these sins. Rasūlullāh ﷺ narrates an example of this, he says, “I was was a shepherd, and one day I told my friend who was also a shepherd with me, ‘Tonight I want to go into Makkah to attend the parties that my peers attend.’” Rasūlullāh ﷺ was a young man at the time and all of his friends would attend parties except he, he was the only one who would not join them in these parties, so Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, “One day, I wanted to go and see what they were doing, so I told my friend to take care of my flock until I come back; he agreed.” Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, “I went into Makkah, and I arrived at the place where they were having this party. As soon as I was hearing the music, Allāh ﷻ struck my ears so I fell down asleep. By the time I woke up, the party was over.” He said, “The next day, I decided to attend another party. I went into Makkah [with] the same arrangement with my friend, and as soon as I reached the place and I was hearing the music, Allāh ﷻ struck my ears again and I fell down asleep. And I woke up after the party was over and I realised that this is a sign to me from Allāh; Allāh ﷻ is giving me a sign.”

Rasūlullāh's ﷺ Natural Dislike towards Idol Worshipping

We have another example that was mentioned by Zayd Ibn Hārithah. Zayd Ibn Hārithah, who was a servant of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, narrates and says, "There were brass idols called Isāf and Nā'ilah which the Polytheists would touch as they performed Tawāf. The Messenger of Allāh said, 'Do not touch it.'" So you had Isāf and Nā'ilah, and the people of Quraish, when they would make Hajj or 'Umrah, they would touch these two idols, it was part of their worship. Rasūlullāh ﷺ told Zayd, "Do not touch them." Now, how did Rasūlullāh ﷺ know that he was not supposed to touch the idols? It was *Hidāyah* coming from Allāh ﷻ. [Zayd continues], "So, as we went round again, I told myself that I would touch it to see what would happen. When I did so, the Messenger of Allāh asked me, 'Were you not forbidden to do that?'" Zayd then stated, "The Messenger of Allāh never saluted an idol right up to when Allāh the Almighty honoured him and He gave him the Revelation." Rasūlullāh ﷺ never made Sujūd to an idol, never touched the idols in the sense of worship, and Rasūlullāh ﷺ had a natural dislike towards idol worshipping, and he even applied those rules on his family; Rasūlullāh ﷺ told Zayd Ibn Hārithah, who was his servant, 'Do not be involved in touching these idols.' And that is why 'Alï Ibn Abī Tālib never worshipped an idol; why? Because he was raised up in the house of who? In the house of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. When Abū Tālib was poor, Rasūlullāh ﷺ offered to take care of his son 'Alï Ibn Abī Tālib, so 'Alï Ibn Abī Tālib was raised up by Rasūlullāh ﷺ, and 'Alï Ibn Abī Tālib therefore never made Sujūd to an idol, he never worshipped idols because he was brought up in the house of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ.

Allāh ﷻ was guiding him ﷺ towards some of the 'Ibādāt that no one else knew about. Among the people of Quraish, during Hajj, they would be the only people not to participate in 'Arafah. So you have different rituals of Hajj; you have Tawāf around Al-Ka'bah, you have Sā'ī between As-Safā Wal-Marwā, you have standing in 'Arafah, you have camping in Minā. The people of Quraish would participate in all of these rituals with the exception of 'Arafah; why? Because 'Arafah is considered out of Al-Haram, 'Arafah is outside the boundaries of the sacred place – Al-Haram. So all of the Arabs would go to 'Arafah in Hajj with the exception of the people of Quraish, they would say, "We are the dwellers of Al-Haram, how can we go outside of Al-Haram?" That was their logic; if we are

part of Al-Haram, if we are the people of Makkah, how can we get out of the boundaries of Makkah? So they would stop at the borders with ‘Arafah. Al-Mut‘am Bin Jubair [once] lost his camel and he went to look for it, and he ended up searching for his camel in ‘Arafah. To his amazement, who does he find there? Muhammad ﷺ. Al-Mut‘am said, “Is he not from among the people of Quraish? What is he doing in ‘Arafah?” But Allāh ﷻ was guiding Muhammad ﷺ by *Fitrah* to go to ‘Arafah during the time of Hajj.

Shepherding – Rasūlullāh’s ﷺ First Profession

The first profession for Rasūlullāh ﷺ was shepherding, that is the first thing he did. And in Bukhārī, Rasūlullāh ﷺ says, “Allāh has not sent a Prophet who was not a shepherd.” His Companions then asked, “And you?” He said, “Yes, I used to herd sheep with compensation from the people of Makkah.” Every Prophet has been a shepherd. It is striking that Allāh ﷻ has trained all of his Ambiyā' by going through this line of work; being a shepherd.

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Lessons Ambiyā' Learnt from being Shepherds

What are the lessons that we can learn from Ambiyā' being shepherds? There are lessons to be learned from them being shepherds and there are lessons to be learned from them being shepherds of specifically sheep, because that is what the Hadith states; it did not just make an unqualified statement that they were shepherds, it states that they were shepherds of sheep. Actually, the Hadīth says *Rā‘i Al-Ghanam*, and Ghanam could mean either sheep or goats; the same word in Arabic refers to both.

Responsibilty

The most important lesson to learn from that – we are talking about lessons that the Ambiyā' learned from being shepherds – the most important lesson that they learn, the most important training that they get from being shepherds, is responsibility. And Rasūlullāh ﷺ says in the Hadith, “You are all shepherds, and you are all responsible for your herd.” And then he said that the Imām is responsible for his people – the Imām meaning the leader of the Muslims – the

man is responsible for his household, the woman is responsible; everyone is responsible. So the first lesson to learn from being a shepherd is responsibility. You know, a shepherd usually is working for someone else who owns the flock, so they are hired by someone else, so they have to report to a higher authority, they have to report to someone else. Now, a shepherd cannot go back to the owner and say, 'Well, I am sorry I lost one sheep because that sheep happened to be stupid.' It does not matter what the sheep do, you are responsible. Anything that happens to this flock, even if the sheep was wrong, you are responsible for it. You cannot go back and say, 'Well the sheep was wrong, it is not my fault.' No, it is your fault. So they learned to be responsible for a herd even if the herd is not responsible for itself. They still feel that they are going to be held accountable for the flock regardless of whether the flock is intelligent or not, whether they are united or not, whether they obey or not; I am accountable for them. So it is a very important lesson for the leader; you are responsible for your herd. And the Ambiyā' of Allāh, one day, are going to be accountable to Allāh ﷻ for their people. So that is the first lesson they learned; being responsible.

Patience

Second Lesson: It teaches them patience. Taking out sheep to graze; they take their time, they are slow, and you have to wait, you have to be patient. They might end up fighting with each other, they might end up playing with each other; you have to wait, you have to be patient. And you cannot really tell them, 'Come on guys, finish up, we have to leave!' You cannot. They are going to take their time, and you have to sit there waiting. You see, shepherds sometimes, when their sheep are grazing, they would just sit on a rock and wait until the sheep have their fill. So it teaches patience, and you are doing this day in and day out, on a daily basis; you leave in the morning, you come back at sunset. And you have to be patient with these animals, you have to bear with them. Even if you are not communicating well with them and if they are not communicating well with you, you still have to be patient and bear with them.

So the Ambiyā' learned to be very very patient with their people. Look at what Mūsā ﷺ went through with Banī Isrā'īl – unbearable! But Mūsā had training in shepherding longer than maybe any other Prophet; he was a shepherd for ten years. When he left Egypt and he got married to the daughter of Shu'aib, what

did his father-in-law tell him? You work for me eight years or ten. So the contract was eight years, and then he told him, 'And if you want to add two years to that, it is a favour that you would do me.' Now, the Āyah in Qur'ān does not state whether Mūsā worked for eight or ten. Rasūlullāh ﷺ wanted to know, so he asked Jibrīl, he asked, "How long did Mūsā work?" Jibrīl told him, "He worked the most complete and perfect term." In other words, ten years. Being a Nabï of Allāh, he was going to do the best job, so even though the contract stated eight years, he did ten. Mūsā ﷺ went through a lot, but he was patient, he was patient with his people.

Nūh ﷺ – nine hundred and fifty years in Da'wah, and he was still patient with his people. He tried every different way; **I invited my people [to truth] night and day.**[16]…**Then I invited them publicly. Then I announced to them and [also] confided to them secretly.**[17] I tried every way, and they were rejecting my Message. Imagine doing the same thing, meeting the same people who are turning you down, for nine hundred and fifty years!

Protection

The Third Lesson: Protection. The shepherd protects the flock. Now, there are various dangers, seen or unseen; you have wolves, you have other beasts, and then you have diseases. The shepherd needs to be on top of this all and needs to consistently make sure that no dangers are affecting the flock. And the Ambiyā' of Allāh are very protective of their people, they try to protect them from physical and psychological dangers. In Madīnah, at night, suddenly a commotion was heard, so some of the Sahābah immediately picked up their weapons and were on their horses and were racing towards the source of the sound. They went there and to their amazement they found Rasūlullāh ﷺ already on his way back, telling them, "*Lan Turā'u*," he told them everything was fine. So even though these Sahābah were so fast and swift in getting there, Rasūlullāh ﷺ was already there before them, and he checked it out, made sure that it was fine and came back. Rasūlullāh would warn them from Shaitān, would warn them from everything. Rasūlullāh ﷺ has not left any danger that could afflict us without warning us; everything, he even talked about events in the future – Ad-Dajjāl. He told the Sahābah, "I have warned you about Ad-Dajjāl like no other Prophet has warned his people," meaning I have given you more details than anyone else. "If he comes out while I am among you, I will take care of that. If

he comes out after I pass away, then everyone is responsible for their own protection."

So that is another lesson that the Ambiyā' learned from being shepherds.

Clear Vision

A Fourth Lesson: These animals are closer to Earth, and their sight is very limited. Sheep can only see so far; any small obstacle would block their view, but a human being, standing up tall, has a longer view, and from that vantage-point can see danger while it is approaching; the sheep cannot. Because the shepherd is standing up and staring at every direction, the first to notice danger would be the shepherd, and the shepherd therefore would give an advance warning to the flock. So you would have this flock of sheep grazing around happily and they do not know that there is some danger a few feet away, but because of their short-sightedness, they cannot see it, while the shepherd can, and that is the case with the Ambiyā'; they sense and they detect the danger before it approaches us, and they have the clearest vision, and they have the longest view, and they have a vantage-point that none of us have, and they know what is good for us. Rasūlullāh ﷺ says, "The analogy of me and you is like someone sitting next to a fire at night." When you have a fire at night, what happens? It would attract insects. If you have a lamp outside of your house and it is night time, you would have all of these moths flying around it; they are attracted by any source of light. Now, if they see fire, they think it is light, not knowing that it will burn them. So all of these moths and flying insects are attracted to the fire thinking it is light, and they get there and they burn; you just hear a sound, what you are hearing is really an insect exploding, so it is burning alive. Rasūlullāh ﷺ says, "That is the analogy if me and you; I am like someone standing next to this fire, and you are attracted to it and you are jumping in it while I am grabbing you by your clothes dragging you away and you are forcing yourselves into it." I am holding you, dragging you by your clothes, and you are releasing yourself from me, jumping into the fire. He knows that is is fire; we do not. He sees the danger; we do not. Rasūlullāh ﷺ is inviting the people to Jannah, and they are forcing themselves to the path of Hellfire.

So the *Rā'i* – the shepherd, sees the danger and realises it, and is warning, giving very strong warnings to the flock. If you see in front of you a blind man

walking, and in front of this man is a deep trench, and this man is blind, he cannot see, so within a few steps he is going to fall in that trench and he might kill himself, in that situation what would your response be? You would jump up and scream and give that man an immediate warning; be careful! You are not going to sit there, think about it, and try to think about some very polite and pleasant words that you could deliver to this man. You are going to scream to the top of your voice and tell him, "Be careful!" And that is what the Ambiyā' were doing; they were giving a very plain, straight-forward warning. Not because they lack in sensitivity and they are attempting to hurt the feelings of others, no, because they want to save the other people, because they really cared about them. And the Rā'i might hit some of the animals, not because he wants to hurt them but because he wants to save them. So whenever we see a Nabï of Allāh standing up and giving what seems to be a very direct and staunch warning, it is because they care about their people. It is reported that Rasūlullāh ﷺ stood on the pulpit in the Masjid and told the people, "*Andhartukumun Nār! Andhartukumun Nār! Andhartukumun Nār!* – I am warning you [of] Hellfire! I am warning you [of] Hellfire! I am warning you [of] Hellfire!" And his voice was going up and up and up, the narrator of the Hadīth said that the people in the marketplace could hear Rasūlullāh ﷺ in the Masjid. And he was repeating the same thing again and again – I am warning you Hellfire. So they have a long view.

Simplicity

Number Five: Simplicity. A shepherd is living a very simple life. You cannot have all of the accessories of life with you in the desert. You cannot take your Mercedes Benz car and your refrigerator with all of the different fruits and types of food [in it], and you have a couch with you in the desert, and you have a TV and a remote control; you cannot have that in the desert. In the desert all what can carry with you are a few items and that is it, you have to give up all of the things you have. Even if you are a wealthy person, you cannot have these things with you out there while you are shepherding, you cannot have it. You are going out in the desert walking with these animals, you have to be light. So it teaches them to lead a simple life. A shepherd is eating very simple food, is having very simple accommodations; it teaches them simplicity, they become very simple, and it teaches them to get accustomed to different environments. It could be

raining; you still need to feed the animals, it could be cold, hot, windy – all different climates, a shepherd needs to deal with that. And a shepherd is the last to take cover; you are responsible for these animals, you have to take them in, you have to protect them. So it teaches them to get accustomed to different ways of life. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ would travel from one place to another, would go out in battles, and he was able to get accustomed to all of this because of his experience as a shepherd.

Closeness to the Creation of Allāh

[Number] Six: Closeness to the creation of Allāh. It pulls you out of the artificial world; you are out with the creation of Allāh, close to nature. Dear brothers and sisters, the life that we are leading could leave some harmful scars on our hearts and our way of thinking. Living in this concrete world where everything is artificial, is against the natural disposition of our creation. We were created from this Earth, and we are close to nature, we are part of it, and keeping us away from that in this artificial world is keeping us away from contemplating in the creation of Allāh. Look at how many references are made in Qurān to the creation of Allāh; the sun, the moon, stars, heavens, mountains, rivers, oceans, plants – all of this is mentioned in Qurān. Why is Allāh talking about all of these things? To draw our attention to His creation, because His creation is a mirror of His abilities; the creation of Allāh is a mirror of the attributes of Allāh. If you want to learn about the greatness of Allāh, look at His creation. If you want to learn about the wisdom of Allāh, look at His creation. If you want to learn about the knowledge of Allāh, look at His creation. Basically, if you want to learn about all of the names of Allāh ﷻ, you will find some reflection of them in the creation of Allāh. So when we want to learn about Allāh, all what we have to do is look at His creation – that is how we can learn the *'Azamah* – the greatness, of Allāh.

A shepherd spends a lot of time close to nature, and that gives them a chance to contemplate. Not every shepherd will take advantage of that, but the opportunity is given, and the Ambiyā' of Allāh took advantage of that opportunity. Rasūlullāh ﷺ would spend time thinking about the creation of Allāh, wondering about it.

So these are some lessons – there are some others – some lessons to be learned from being shepherds.

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Why Specifically Shepherds of Sheep

Now, what about [the Ambiyā' of Allāh being shepherds of] sheep? How come specifically sheep? How come it did not say they were shepherds of camels? Shepherds of cows? How come specifically sheep? Now, we might say that in the case of Rasūlullāh ﷺ being brought up in Arabia, it was not their custom to raise cows; but they did raise camels, and Rasūlullāh ﷺ was never in his life a shepherd of camels. Other Ambiyā' who lived in other areas, how come it was specifically sheep? Well, sheep are very weak animals, they are weaker than cows and much weaker than camels, therefore they need more protection, they need more care, and because of this weakness, they could easily fall prey. And when Rasūlullāh ﷺ wanted to warn us from Shaitān, what did Rasūlullāh ﷺ say? He brought in his experience and he said, "Stick with the Jamā'ah," be with the group, be close to the group of the Muslims, "because the wolf eats from the stray sheep." So Rasūlullāh ﷺ learned as a shepherd that if one sheep goes astray, that will be the target of the wolf; the wolf will not hit the flock, the wolf will hit the one that is alone. And we are weak as these sheep when it comes to Shaitān, Shaitān can tempt us and attack us.

We are Affected by the Environment we Work in

We talked about the weakness of sheep and how similar that is to our weakness, but there is another important lesson to learn, and this is the fact that we are affected by the environment we work in; our work leaves permanent influence on our personality. Shepherds of sheep are different than shepherds of camels and shepherds of cows, shepherds of sheep are different than cowboys, and cowboys are different than shepherds of camel. Why? Because they are dealing with a different animal. Sheep tend to be very compassionate, very merciful, and they are weak, so the shepherd learns to become merciful and kind with them because they are very fragile animals, you cannot be too harsh with sheep. So the Ambiyā' of Allāh learn how to be compassionate with their followers. But when it comes to camels for example, camels tend to be very arrogant

animals, and you cannot be soft with a camel otherwise it will take advantage of you. With a camel you have to meet that arrogance with strength, you meet the pride with pride, and that makes the shepherds of camels rough, and it makes them very tough, and they could be rude, and that is something that is learnt because of the environment that they are living in. And we could talk about the qualities or the characteristics of cows and draw their influence on their shephards.

What you do affects you. Teachers tend to have a different personality than doctors, doctors have a different personality than engineers, engineers have a different personality than skilled workers, farmers have different personalities than so and so; your work affects your personality. So after being a doctor for a few years, you lose the ablity to write, you start scribbling. Being a teacher for a very long time makes a person such a fatherly figure and he is always giving advice. They might do this with people who are their peers, but because they are used to dealing with children, they start dealing with others in a similar way. People who stay in the academic field for a very long time tend to be very scholarly, even when they are outside the academic world; the way they speak, the sophistication of their talk, the words that they pick would be different than someone who has less education. And mechanics, since they are always dealing with machines, would tend to have a personality that is different than a farmer who is always dealing with plants and is close to nature. Actually, the influence is both ways; your personality will affect your profession and your profession will affect you, because people with a certain interest would tend to choose a profession that suits their personality, but then that profession would push them further in those traits and they would end up developing those. People who stay in the political world for a very long time tend to be more deceptive than others – and it also depends on the political situation that you are working in – because that is your daily business, that is how you have to be from morning till night. For example, an actor, somebody who is always acting, putting on a different face, imitating a different personality; that teaches them something, does it not? It affects their personality. So our work affects us, therefore as a Muslim you need to be careful on what type of work you do. Now, this is not to say that we should not spread in different fields, but keep in mind that you need to choose a work that would suit your personality, and also keep in mind that your work will affect you and influence you. Every type of work out there has something good

in it, try to take advantage of that good and try to eliminate the bad of the field. I mentioned for example being deceptive and lying in politics, now, that does not mean that we should not go into that field, because as Muslims we need to change that image of politics. With the Sahābah ﷺ, almost every Sahābī had that involvement. When you look at a certain time after Rasūlullāh ﷺ passed away, you would rarely find a Sahābī who did not assume office in one place or another, whether it was a governorship, or whether it was mayor-ship of a town, or whether it was leading an army, but the political environment they lived in was absolutely different than what we have today; it was an environment of honesty and straight-forwardness, and being accountable and responsible to the people and serving them. So our work does affect and influence us.

Comments by Ibn Hajar Al-'Asqalānī

Enough said about shepherds of sheep. Ibn Hajar – a side note here but just a little bit about him – Ibn Hajar is one of the classical scholars, he wrote the most prominent commentary on Sahīh Al-Bukhārī. Ibn Hajar was a scholar in different fields; Hadīth, Fiqh, 'Aqīdah. His commentary on Bukhārī is the most famous and the most prominent. There are other commentaries on Bukhārī, but none of them gained the [same] prominence as *Fath Al-Bārī* by Ibn Hajar Al-'Asqalānī. Since this Hadīth is in Bukhārī, here I have a quote from Ibn Hajar commenting on this particular Hadīth. He says,

> "The wisdom behind having the Prophets as shepherds before Prophethood is that they may become skilled in herding a flock, as they will be responsible for their respective nations in the future. In herding, one attains forbearance and mercy and it endues patience, for when a shepherd is obliged to gather his flock and herd it from one area to another at once, knowing the traits of all, and all the while protecting the flock from predators, he has thus attained the skills necessary to lead a nation and protect it from its enemies, both within and abroad. Thus the Prophets learned patience when leading their people and attained an understanding of the different natures of people, they learned to show kindness to the weak and resolve with the dominant. The reasons for which Allāh ﷻ had chosen the sheep for the Prophets as opposed to the communal cows or camels, is that they are animals that are weak and need extra guidance and attention. Sheep are more difficult to maintain as a flock because of their propensity to go astray and wander away. This is akin

> to human traits within a society, and it is the divine wisdom of Allāh to train these Prophets accordingly. The Prophet's ﷺ mentioning of this humble trait shared by all Prophets attests to his humility to Allāh."

Muhammad Al-'Abdah, who is a current writer, also comments on this [Hadīth] and he states:

> "This faith excels through the free-thinkers, the courageous, the intelligent, and those who are just, and one cannot encompass it except by distancing themselves from lowly character. It is therefore incumbent upon the Muslims to take on the pure characteristics embodied in humanity's natural disposition. This was the example that was sought by the early Khalīfah 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb ﷺ when he pleaded with his people to toughen up and learn how to ride a steed, he feared for his people the longing for this life and adopting reprehensible characteristics. This does not mean that one must abandon an urban living in order to achieve the stated objectives, but it does mean that one should abandon those things in their life that turned them away from the difficulties of this Message."

Muhammad Al-'Abdah is actually commenting on Rasūlullāh ﷺ living as a shepherd in the desert and also Rasūlullāh ﷺ being brought up in the desert in the early years of his life. And then he draws in the saying of 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb when he was a Khalīfah, he could have access to the best that this world could offer, but he still lived a simple life, and he was warning the Muslims, telling them that you need to toughen up, because this Message demands sometimes you going through some difficult situations and you need to be prepared and ready for that. Da'wah is one aspect; a Dā'iyah cannot be sincere and be whole-heartedly involved in Da'wah if they cannot have patience and they are not willing to go into situations that might be difficult.

Hilf Al-Fudūl

The next important event that happened during the early years of Rasūlullāh ﷺ was a pact called Hilf Al-Fudūl. The story behind this is that there was a man who came from Zabīd in Yemen, he came to do business in Makkah. His merchandise was taken by Al-'Aas Bin Wā'il who promised to pay him back; he was going to sell it and pay him back. Al-'Aas Bin Wā'il after a while refused to

pay this man, he was taking advantage of the fact that that he was a foreigner, he was not from Makkah. He told him frankly, "I am not going to pay you." Al-'Aas expected that this man would just walk away; he was a foreigner, who would help him? But the man did not; the man stood up for his right and he went to a public place in Makkah and he started calling the people of Quraish, and he was telling them, "I was oppressed in your land. Are you people who are going to stand up for my rights? Will you allow this oppression to happen in you land?" And he said a few emotional words, so some of the clans of Quraish decided to meet together to bring about an agreement on protecting the rights of the weak in Makkah, [they thought] we cannot allow this to happen, and among these families of Quraish was the family of Rasūlullāh ﷺ – his uncles.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ at the time was a young boy, but he said, "My uncles took me with them to attend this meeting." The meeting was held in the house of 'Abdullāh Ibn Jad'ān; this was symbolic for them to have it in his house because 'Abdullāh Ibn Jad'ān was a man who was very generous, very kind to others, and he was a person who would stand up for what was right, so they decided to honour him by having this meeting in his house. So they came together and they made an agreement that we will stand together –all of us present here – we will stand together to protect the rights of the oppressed, of the weak. This happened before Prophethood, it was a pact that occurred between Non-Believers, between Mushrikīn. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "I witnessed in the house of 'Abdullāh Bin Jad'ān a pact made that I would not have exchanged it for the choicest herd, and if it had been suggested after Islām, I would have responded positively to it." Rasūlullāh ﷺ is saying that if I am invited to it today, after the Message of Islām has been given to me, I would have still responded to it, even though it was held by Non-Believers. The important lesson to learn from this is that Muslims should side with what is right no matter what the source is, no matter where that is coming from. Muslims should stand for human rights, should stand for the oppressed, should stand for the needy, no matter what their religious background is; we should stand up for what is good. As a Muslim, we stand up for what is right. And Rasūlullāh ﷺ was making this point by stating that I would respond to it today if I was invited. The man was given back what belonged to him after that.

An incident happened later in the time of Al-'Amawiyyīn – we are talking about a few decades after Rasūlullāh ﷺ passed away – it happened between Al-Husain Bin 'Alï, the son of 'Alï Ibn Abī Tālib, and Al-Walīd Bin 'Utbah Bin Abū Sufyān who was the governor of Madīnah. Because Al-Walīd was the governor, he was taking advantage of his position and he had taken away some property that belonged to the son of 'Alï Ibn Abī Tālib, Al-Husain. What Al-Husain did was he went to Al-Walīd and told him, "You either gave me back what belongs to me, otherwise I am going to walk into the Masjid and invite the people to Hilf Al-Fudūl, I am going to remind them about Hilf Al-Fudūl." Now, 'Abdullāh Ibn Az-Zubair was with Al-Walīd at that time, and he said, "And I too swear by Allāh that if he does invoke it, I will draw my sword and stand there with him until he gets his justice, or we will all die together." And then some other people heard about that; Al-Miswar Bin Makhramah, and 'Abdur-Rahmān Bin 'Uthmān Bin 'Ubaid, and others, and they gave similar statements, so now it was picking up, and Al-Walīd realised that it could become quite dangerous, so he gave back to Al-Husain what belonged him. The reason why I am bringing this up even though it happened way after Seerah of the the life of Rasūlullāh ﷺ is to show that Muslims would not allow wrong to happen in front of them. Here you have people who were living under a particular leader, Al-Walīd Bin 'Utbah, nevertheless they stood up and they protected their brother who was in need, even if they had to give up their lives. So a Muslim should stand up for what is right. Sheikh Muhammad Al-Ghazāli comments on this pact, he says,

"This pact shows that no matter how dark life becomes and oppressive dictators become, noble characteristics will still remain in certain people who stand up for justice and *Birr* – righteousness. Allāh has made co-operation in enjoining good an obligation upon Muslims which He has called to in the verse: **And co-operate in righteousness and piety, but do not co-operate in sin and aggression.** [18] So for a group of Muslims to enter into a treaty or a contract, such as the aforementioned, is made permissible because it is only a reinforcement for an Islāmic obligation. However, this by definition must be dissimilar to the situation of Masjid Dirār (this was a mosque created in Madīnah to exclude groups of Muslims), where the co-operation turns into a nationalistic or elitist strategy to exclude Muslims. As for the Muslims contracting with the people of other faiths in order to remove oppression or to

face an oppressor, this becomes permissible for them if there is in it the welfare of Islām and Muslims in the present and the future. The basis for this is essentially the Prophet's ﷺ willingness to answer the call for the pact even after Islām."

5

Important Events

Marriages of Rasūlullāh ﷺ

Rasūlullāh ﷺ and Khadījah رضي الله عنها

The next important event is the marriage of Rasūlullāh ﷺ to Khadījah. Khadījah was a well-known and prosperous woman in Makkah, she was wealthy. She was not married, she was old in age, and she used to hire a man to travel for her and do business, because the trade of the people of Makkah used to be based on traveling to Yemen and Syria, Ash-Shām, Allāh ﷻ describes that in Sūrah Quraish: **For the accustomed security of the Quraysh - Their accustomed security [in] the caravan of winter and summer. Let them worship the Lord of this House, Who has fed them, [saving them] from**

hunger and made them safe, [saving them] from fear.[19] They had a journey of winter and a journey of summer; one to Yemen and one to Ash-Shām.

Khadījah ﷺ Hires Rasūlullāh ﷺ

So Khadījah would hire men to work for her and take care of her business. She happened to hire Muhammad ﷺ; she heard about his honesty and she was running into trouble with a lot of men who were not being honest, so she wanted to hire someone who was trustworthy. She heard about Muhammad ﷺ so she hired him, and she had her servant accompany Muhammad ﷺ, her servant's name was Maisarah. Muhammad ﷺ went to Ash-Shām, did business for her, came back, and Maisarah reported back to his master. Maisarah went to Khadījah and told her, "This man's trustworthiness and honesty is amazing, it is outstanding," and he was praising Muhammad ﷺ.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ Marries Khadījah ﷺ

Well, Khadījah became very interested in Muhammad ﷺ; his character was admirable. Khadījah ﷺ, who was a wealthy woman, who was sought after by the noble men of Quraish, she said, "I want to marry you," and Rasūlullāh ﷺ agreed. Rasūlullāh ﷺ was twenty five and she was forty, the difference was fifteen years; she was his senior. And Rasūlullāh ﷺ never married anyone else before Khadījah ﷺ passed away. All of the surviving children of Rasūlullāh ﷺ were from Khadījah ﷺ; Fātimah was the daughter of Khadījah ﷺ, she bore six children for him; Zainab, Ruqayyah, Umm Kulthūm, Fātimah, Al-Qāsim and 'Abdullāh. And none of them ended up having descendants except Fātimah ﷺ, and that is where the lineage of Rasūlullāh ﷺ is continuing; through the descendants of Fātimah and 'Alï.

Rasūlullāh's ﷺ Love for Khadījah ﷺ

Rasūlullāh ﷺ loved Khadījah ﷺ so much, and Rasūlullāh kept his loyalty to Khadījah even after she passed away; he would always remember her, always mention her name, and that sometimes would cause jealousy among the other wives of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. But Rasūlullāh ﷺ had so much love and admiration for Khadījah and so much respect for her because Khadījah is the one who stood up for him and supported him when everybody else betrayed Muhammad ﷺ.

‘Ā'ishah ﷺ, who was the most beloved to Rasūlullāh ﷺ after that, she would sometimes feel this jealousy. In Sahīh Muslim it says that ‘Ā'ishah said, “I did not become jealous of any of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ except Khadījah, and I have not seen her. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ used to at times slaughter a sheep and say, ‘Send it to the friends of Khadījah.’” So not only did Rasūlullāh ﷺ always remember her, he kept on maintaining a relationship with the friends of Khadījah. [‘Ā'ishah ﷺ continues], “And one day I angered him by replying out of jealousy of Khadījah, so he ﷺ said, ‘I have been given by Allāh her love.’” Once he mentioned the name of Khadījah, so ‘Ā'ishah was upset, Rasūlullāh ﷺ responded and said [that] this is something from Allāh, I was given her love, it is not something that I control; Allāh has put her love in my heart.

In another Hadīth narrated by Ahmad and At-Tirmidhī, ‘Ā'ishah ﷺ said, “The Messenger of Allāh used to, at many times, not leave his home without praising Khadījah.” This is amazing, how much love Rasūlullāh ﷺ had for her. “One of the days he praised her, and out of jealousy I said, ‘Was she not but an elder woman that Allāh has replaced her for you with what is better?’ He became angered and said, ‘No! By Allāh, He did not replace me with anyone better, for she had faith in me when the people rejected, she believed me when the people belied me, she made comfortable with what she had when the people denied me, and Allāh has blessed me with children from her.’” So Rasūlullāh ﷺ would become angry when he would hear anything against Khadījah ﷺ. And this shows us an aspect of the personality of Rasūlullāh ﷺ; his loyalty to the people who were close to him. This was years after Khadījah passed away; opportunist people take advantage of a person, and whenever that person is gone, that is the end of the relationship. Rasūlullāh ﷺ would always remember his old friends, old relatives; Hamzah Bin ‘Abdul Muttalib, Khadījah ﷺ, Mus‘ab Bin ‘Umair. In fact, Subhān'Allāh, one amazing thing that brings a person to tears [is that] before Rasūlullāh ﷺ passed away, one of the last things he did was to go and visit the cemetery of his friends who died in the Battle of Uhud. The seventy Companions who died in the Battle of Uhud, when Rasūlullāh ﷺ felt that he would be leaving Dunyā soon, he went to the cemetery and made Du‘ā' for them, and he was saying in that Du‘ā' that soon we will meet. Rasūlullāh ﷺ was missing them so much, and was asking Allāh ﷻ to bring him with them and to join them together in Jannah.

So Rasūlullāh ﷺ had this strong relationship with his Sahabah and loyalty, and he never forgot his wife Khadījah who stood with him in moments of difficulty, he never forgot that, and he would continuously make Du'ā' for her and mention her name. And Khadījah was a special person; Khadījah رضي الله عنها, when she was living, Jibrīl descended on Muhammad ﷺ and said, "Khadījah is going to approach you now and she is carrying for you some food, when she arrives, tell her that Allāh is giving her Salām, and tell her that I am giving her Salām." That is how special Khadījah was; Allāh ﷻ sends down Jibrīl عليه السلام to tell Khadījah that I am giving Salām to you, and Jibrīl is then adding his own Salām to the statement and telling Muhammad ﷺ, "And tell her that Jibrīl is giving her his Salām." And then Jibrīl عليه السلام said, "And give her the glad-tidings of a palace in Paradise." So she was granted a place in Jannah.

Khadījah رضي الله عنها – One of the Four Greatest Women who Ever Lived

Khadījah is one of the four greatest women that ever lived. Rasūlullāh ﷺ says that the greatest women that ever set foot on the face of the Earth are four; Maryam Bint 'Imrān, Khadījah Bint Khuwaylid, Fātimah Bint Muhammad, and Āsiyah Bint Muzāhim; these are the greatest women. The greatest among them is Maryam عليها السلام by the verse in Qurān: **And [mention] when the angels said, "O Mary, indeed Allāh has chosen you and purified you and chosen you above the women of the worlds."**[20] [She is the greatest woman] by the statement of Qurān. Second is Khadījah, she is number two; she was the second greatest woman. Number three; Fātimah Bint Muhammad, and number four; Āsiyah Bint Muzāhim. And all of these four women had something to do with a Nabï; two of them were ones who brought up Ambiyā' – Maryam عليها السلام brought up 'Īsā, she was his mother, and Āsiyah brought up Mūsā. And then Khadījah was the wife of a Nabï, and Fātimah was the daughter of a Nabï.

Answering the Orientalists – the Professional Enemies of Islam

Rasūlullāh ﷺ reached the age of twenty five, and in his Seerah, Rasūlullāh ﷺ was known as being chaste in an environment that was corrupt. And the reason why I am bringing this up is because some of the orientalists, the ones who are professional enemies of Islām, use that as [a way of showing] their animosity towards Islām, it is their role in life, they try to attack the person of Rasūlullāh

ﷺ, and one of the areas that they attack is his marriage life. They talk a lot about his marriage to ‘Ā'ishah, they talk about the fact that he married twelve women, and they try to accuse Muhammad ﷺ of being a womaniser. So let us look at the marriage life of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, let us study it.

Number One: Rasūlullāh ﷺ Remains Chaste in an Environment that is Corrupt

Number One: Rasūlullāh ﷺ reaches the age of twenty five in an environment where *Zinā'* – adultery and fornication, is widespread. And you might have read the Hadīth of ‘Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها which is in Bukhārī where she talks about the four different [types of] relationships that existed between men and women; one of them was the traditional marriage, the other one was brothels that were legal in Makkah, and they would have flags on top of them as signs for anybody who is interested in this corrupt behaviour, and then they had this other type of relationship where a woman would sleep with a group of men which could go up to ten, and then if she becomes pregnant and she delivers, then she could call these men in and she could just pick any one out of them and say that you are the father of the child. And [the fourth type was where] they they had this strange relationship where a man would allow his wife to sleep with a noble man in order to have some noble lineage. So it was quite a corrupt environment; young men would party and sleep with women with whom they had no legal relationship. Rasūlullāh ﷺ lives up to the age of twenty five and he was able to fight the tide and stay away from all of this corruption, all the way until he reached the age of twenty five. So that is number one.

Number Two: Rasūlullāh ﷺ Marries a Woman Fifteen Years his Senior

Number Two: At the age of twenty five, he chooses to marry a woman who is fifteen years older than himself, and she is divorced. Now, Rasūlullāh ﷺ, being from the noble family of Banū Hāshim, he could have chosen for himself any woman he wanted in Makkah, and if he was interested in these desires, he would have chosen for himself a young woman to marry rather than marrying a lady who is fifteen years older than him; she was forty years old when Rasūlullāh ﷺ married her.

Number Three: Rasūlullāh ﷺ Remains with Khadījah رضي الله عنها until Fifty

Number Three: Rasūlullāh ﷺ remains with Khadījah until he reaches the age of fifty, and we know that the age in which men would have strong desires towards women would be from a young age to around the age of fifty; that is the young age of a man when the desires would be the strongest. So for Rasūlullāh ﷺ to remain married to Khadījah in a very happy marriage – and it is not reported at all that Rasūlullāh ﷺ had any intentions of marrying anyone else, he did not even contemplate the idea, there are no reports of that – so for Rasūlullāh ﷺ to continue with Khadījah رضي الله عنها from the age of twenty five to the age of fifty, is a clear indication that Rasūlullāh ﷺ had none of those thoughts in his mind, and I think this completely destroys that argument.

After Khadījah رضي الله عنها passes away; Rasūlullāh ﷺ remains as a bachelor for about two to three years. Later on, he marries another widow, As-Sayyidah Sawdah رضي الله عنها. The reasons for him marrying Sawdah are because Sawdah رضي الله عنها was in Abyssinia, she came back to Makkah, and her husband passed away. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ, out of care for his Companions, he married her; husband died, she does not have anyone to provide for her, [so] Rasūlullāh ﷺ marries her. And she was quite old in age, because later on in Madīnah, we know that Sawdah ended up giving up her night to ‘Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها, because she was very old in age.

Wisdom behind Rasūlullāh's ﷺ Many Marriages

Suddenly, within the last ten years of [the life of] Rasūlullāh ﷺ, Rasūlullāh ﷺ married many women to the extent that when he died, he left behind nine widows. So how come this change? From the age of twenty five to fifty he only married Khadījah رضي الله عنها, but then within the last ten years of his life he marries and he leaves behind nine widows. What are the reasons?

Number One: Forging Alliances with Different Tribes

When we study the marriage life of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, we need to look at the life of Rasūlullāh ﷺ comprehensively. The Messenger of Allāh Muhammad ﷺ devoted *all* of his efforts – underline all – all of his efforts, for the promotion of Islām. Everything that he would do, even his decisions in marriage, would be based on the benefit of Islām. Whatever Rasūlullāh ﷺ did in his life, the intention of it

was to promote the Religion of Allāh. He would not do anything to purely satisfy his human desires, he would do it to please Allāh ﷻ. Therefore we need to look at his marriage life in this light. He married a few of his wives to forge alliances with different tribes, to bring them closer to Islām, like his marriage of Juwairiyyah which ended up making the whole tribe of Banū Mustaliq becoming Muslim.

Number Two: Caring for his Companions

Caring for his Companions, his followers, like the example we gave of Sawdah رضي الله عنها.

Number Three: Strengthening of Ties with his Closest Companions

Rasūlullāh ﷺ wanted to strengthen his ties with his closest Companions. Rasūlullāh ﷺ had a strong brotherly feeling towards his Companions, and there was a special group among them with whom Rasūlullāh ﷺ wanted to have a stronger relationship, and that was not only an Islāmic brotherhood but to add to it family ties. And for someone who did not experience Islāmic brotherhood, it is difficult for them to appreciate this. What if you have lived like Rasūlullāh ﷺ with his Companions for twenty three years? What bond would develop between them. They were, Subhān'Allāh, together in moments of ease and in moments of difficulty, on the battlefield and in times of peace, they would eat together, travel together. The relationship that Rasūlullāh ﷺ had with the Sahābah رضي الله عنهم was *so* strong. When we get into the Madīnah era and we talk about the time when Rasūlullāh ﷺ passed away and the feelings of loss that the people of Madīnah had, it is something that we cannot even describe. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ wanted to strengthen the relationship between him and his close Companions. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ married the daughter of Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه, and he married the daughter of ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb رضي الله عنه, and he married his daughter to ‘Uthmān Ibn ‘Affān رضي الله عنه, and when this daughter of Rasūlullāh ﷺ passed away, he married ‘Uthmān [to] another of his daughters, and then she passed away, [and] Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, “If I had ninety nine daughters, I would marry them to ‘Uthmān Ibn ‘Affān one after another.” Rasūlullāh ﷺ wanted to have this relationship between him and ‘Uthmān Ibn ‘Affān. And he married his most beloved daughter Fātimah رضي الله عنها to ‘Alï Ibn Abī Tālib. So now he had a family

relationship between him and the four Khulafā'; Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān and ‘Alï.

Number Four: Conveying the Religion

Number four, and this is very important; conveying the Religion. We are to follow the Sunnah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. He has a Sunnah as a statesman, a Sunnah as a teacher, a Sunnah as an Imām, a Sunnah as a military leader, and he has a Sunnah as a family man. Now, we have hundreds of Companions to convey to us his Sunnah as a statesman, hundreds of Companions to tells us how he acted as a military leader, we have hundreds of Companions to tell us how we was as a teacher and as an Imām; how many do we have to tell us about his family life? How many? Rasūlullāh ﷺ did not have a lot of children who survived him, only Fātimah رضي الله عنها, so who would convey to us his family life? It is his wives. Now, if Rasūlullāh ﷺ only had one wife, first of all, it would be difficult on this one wife to recall every aspect of the family life of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Number two, she could easily be discredited because we only have one source, and we know the vicious attack that is being directed at Abū Hurairah رضي الله عنه because the enemies of Islām know that if they can discredit Abū Hurairah رضي الله عنه, they can completely destroy over five thousand of the sayings of Rasūlullāh ﷺ; by discrediting one man, they could undermine five thousand of the Ahādīth of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. And we already know that that has happened for a fact, there is an attack on Abū Hurairah رضي الله عنه.

And the family life of Rasūlullāh ﷺ was one of the most important aspects of his Sunnah because it relates to every one of us; not every one of us will be an Imām, not everyone will be a military leader, not everyone will be a statesman, not everyone will be a teacher, but almost everyone in the Ummah will be a member of a family. So how will they learn on how to conduct their lives as members of a family without receiving information about how Rasūlullāh ﷺ was a family man? Therefore Rasūlullāh ﷺ had multiple wives so that they would convey to us this body of knowledge of how Rasūlullāh ﷺ acted in his private life. Many of the Sunnan relating to how Rasūlullāh ﷺ treated his wives, how he treated his servants, how he ate, how he dressed, how he would spend his time at home, his ‘Ibādah at night; that was all conveyed to us by the wives of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. So it is not only limited to the section of family Sunnah, but it

also relates to the ‘Ibādah; how Rasūlullāh ﷺ would spend his nights – how did we know that? It was through the wives of Rasūlullāh ﷺ.

So having multiple wives, first of all, they compensate each other, so if one of them forgets, the other would remember. Number two, you have more than one chain of narration; it is coming through multiple sources rather than one. And number three, it becomes impossible to discredit, because now we have more than one person involved.And that is an extremely important thing for us, and remember, Allāh ﷻ has sent Muhammad ﷺ as a living embodiment of Qurān, and therefore Allāh guaranteed that his ﷺ Sunnah will reach to us because it is part of the promise of Allāh to protect Qurān; the protection of Qurān is not only that the words of Qurān will be protected but also part of its interpretation by Rasūlullāh ﷺ would survive, and that was done through the Sahābah رضي الله عنهم and most importantly through the wives of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. So for us, the Ummah, it was very critical that Rasūlullāh ﷺ had multiple wives, and that was why he was excluded from the ruling of having four or less [wives]; Allāh ﷻ has allowed him to have more because of the special circumstances of Muhammad ﷺ, this was done and destined by Allāh ﷻ as a protection of His religion.

Controversy Surrounding Rasūlullāh’s ﷺ Marriages to ‘Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها and Zainab رضي الله عنها

Now, the two most controversial marriages of Rasūlullāh ﷺ are his marriage to ‘Ā'ishah and his marriage to Zainab Bint Jahsh; these are the most targeted marriages of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. We do not have a lot of complaints about his marriage to Umm Salamah or Umm Habībah or Sawdah, but there are a lot of attacks directed at his marriages to ‘Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها and Zainab Bint Jahsh. ‘Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها because Rasūlullāh ﷺ married her at the age of six, and the marriage was consummated at the age of nine. And the attack against Zainab Bint Jahsh is because she was married to his adopted son and then Rasūlullāh ﷺ married her later on. So these are the two marriages where you have a lot of controversy, so let us look at these two particular cases.

Subhān'Allāh, it so happens that the two particular marriages that are targeted are the only two marriages of Rasūlullāh ﷺ that were divinely instructed; none of the other marriages of Rasūlullāh ﷺ were instructed by Allāh except these

two. His marriage to Zainab was instructed in Qurān in Sūrah Al-Ahzāb: **And [remember, O Muhammad], when you said to the one on whom Allāh bestowed favour and you bestowed favour, "Keep your wife and fear Allāh," while you concealed within yourself that which Allāh is to disclose. And you feared the people, while Allāh has more right that you fear Him. So when Zayd had no longer any need for her, We married her to you in order that there not be upon the believers any discomfort concerning the wives of their adopted sons when they no longer have need of them. And ever is the command of Allāh accomplished.**[21] [In this Āyah, Allāh states:] **So when Zayd had no longer any need for her, We married her to you.** So it is in Qurān.

And the marriage of Rasūlullāh ﷺ to ‘Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها was divinely inspired through the dream which Rasūlullāh ﷺ saw, and this dream is mentioned in Bukhārī. Rasūlullāh ﷺ says, “Jibrīl came to me, and I saw you (‘Ā'ishah) wearing a silk dress, and when I uncovered you – (this is in the dream, before Rasūlullāh marries her) – when I uncovered you, I saw you, and Jibrīl told me, ‘This is your wife in Dunyā and in Ākhirah.’” So Rasūlullāh ﷺ saw a woman, and when he took at look at her, it was Ā'ishah, and then Jibrīl told him, “This is your wife in Dunyā and in Ākhirah.” And Rasūlullāh ﷺ saw this dream twice, and we know that the dreams of the Ambiyā' are all Revelation; *Ru'yal Ambiyā' Wahī* – Rasūlullāh says that the dreams of Ambiyā' are Revelation. So the marriage of Rasūlullāh to ‘Ā'ishah is instructed by Allāh, and the marriage of Rasūlullāh ﷺ to Zainab was instructed by Allāh.

Response to the Muslims

So you have two types of people who would attack this; one type would be Muslims who have weak faith and they wonder how Rasūlullāh ﷺ would do something like this. The response to them would be; it was not Rasūlullāh ﷺ who did it, he was commanded by Allāh to do it. So as a Muslim, do you believe in the command of Allāh or not? It was an exceptional situation that is not allowed for you, that is why it is not part of the Sunnah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ; we cannot marry more than four, that is not part of the Sunnah that we follow, and also his situation with ‘Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها is also not something that is allowed for us, it was an exception that was made for Rasūlullāh ﷺ for particular reasons which I

will talk about. But for a Muslim this would be the response, that these were divinely commanded by Allāh ﷻ therefore we have no right to question them, it was not something that was initiated by Muhammad ﷺ, it was done by Allāh.

Response to the Kuffār

Now, for the ones who are not Muslim and are attacking Rasūlullāh ﷺ and saying that this is an act of, you know, all of the horrible accusations that are directed at Rasūlullāh ﷺ, the response will be that your problem is not really that Rasūlullāh ﷺ married ‘Ā'ishah, your problem is that you do not believe that he is the Messenger of Allāh, you do not believe that he was receiving Revelation, so your problem runs deeper. The issue of bringing up ‘Ā'ishah is just a front in order to attack Islām; even if Rasūlullāh ﷺ did not do it, you would still be attacking him. [As with the response to the Muslims,] we can still say that this was divinely instructed, [but] the response will be, ‘Well how convenient it is, whenever there is something that seems strange, you say that God commanded it,’ – that could be a response, they would say, 'Well these particular two marriages that we are attacking, you say that God is the One who instructed them.' The response will be that we need to then discuss the issue of whether Rasūlullāh ﷺ was a Prophet of Allāh or not, and that would settle the argument. If he is the Prophet of Allāh, then we have no right to question what Allāh ﷻ told him to do. If we establish that he was a Messenger of Allāh receiving Revelation from Allāh, then whatever Allāh ﷻ tells him to do, we should accept it. If Allāh tells one of us to stand against the wall with one foot up in the air until we die, we have no right to question that; it is God who is instructing us to do it, who am I to go against what my Creator wants me to do? Allāh owes nothing to us and we owe everything to Him. Therefore if something is instructed by Allāh, I do not have to understand why it is that I am instructed to do this, I just have to do it.

So I hope that we get the point here, that the enemies of Islām are attacking the marriage of Rasūlullāh ﷺ to ‘Ā'ishah. Even if that did not happen, the attack would still continue, because their problem is that they do not believe in Islām, they do not believe that Muhammad ﷺ is the Messenger of Allāh, they do not believe that he was receiving Revelations from Allāh. So it is pointless to argue on the point of ‘Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها because there is a major problem, and that is they do

not accept him altogether, and that would take us back to the accusations of the people of Quraish that were thrown at Muhammad ﷺ; Allāh ﷻ revealed: **We know that you, [O Muhammad], are saddened by what they say. And indeed, they do not call you untruthful, but it is the verses of Allāh that the wrongdoers reject.**[22] They are not disbelieving you; they are disbelieving the Message of Allāh. They are attacking you because you are the Messenger. They are not attacking your personality just because of your personality, they are attacking you because you are conveying the Message of Allāh to them. So these attacks that are hurdled at Muhammad ﷺ are because he is the Messenger of Allāh.

The Significance of Rasūlullāh's ﷺ Marriage to ʻĀ'ishah رضي الله عنها

The Marriage of Rasūlullāh ﷺ to ʻĀ'ishah رضي الله عنها is One of the Greatest Blessings of Allāh on the Ummah

Now, the marriage of Rasūlullāh ﷺ to ʻĀ'ishah; how come it was so important? Let me make this statement first; one of the greatest blessings of Allāh on us as Muslims, again, one of the greatest blessings of Allāh on us as Muslims, is that Rasūlullāh ﷺ married ʻĀ'ishah. This particular marriage that some people have doubts in their hearts due to the fact that Rasūlullāh ﷺ marries a girl who is six years old, they do not realise that it would have been a disaster on the Ummah if Rasūlullāh ﷺ did not marry ʻĀ'ishah, it is one of the best things that has happened to us.

Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها Possessed the Mind of a Scholar and had an Informal Relationship with Rasūlullāh ﷺ

ʻĀ'ishah رضي الله عنها had a mind of a scholar; she had a very bright mind, [was] very intelligent, and she had an inquisitive nature. ʻĀ'ishah رضي الله عنها describes herself and says, "The Companions of Rasūlullāh ﷺ used to hear the Hadīth of Rasūlullāh and they would immediately follow it, while I would ask Rasūlullāh ﷺ questions about it." ʻĀ'ishah رضي الله عنها, being the wife of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and being the most beloved of his wives, had this informal relationship with Rasūlullāh ﷺ, so she could afford to question him and ask him, while the others were very respectful of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and they would not dare do that. So it needed someone who had

this intimate relationship with Rasūlullāh ﷺ to be able to ask questions and to enquire about the certain statements of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. And [if] you remember, we talked about ‘Amr Ibn Al-‘Aas, and we said how much he loved Rasūlullāh ﷺ, and when he was dying he said , ‘If you would ask me to describe to you Rasūlullāh ﷺ I would not be able to do so, because I had such love and admiration and respect for him; I lived with him for years and I could not even look him straight in the eye because of the deep respect that I had for Rasūlullāh ﷺ.’ But ‘Ā'ishah ؓ, being very young and playful at that age, and having a very close relationship with Rasūlullāh ﷺ, Rasūlullāh could say something and she would ask, and she would argue with Rasūlullāh ﷺ; no one else could afford to do that. So we learned so much because of that. Plus, ‘Ā'ishah ؓ had the mind of a scholar, and she became one of the greatest scholars of Islām. Among the top seven narrators of Hadīth, ‘Ā'ishah ؓ comes number four; ‘Ā'ishah is one of the top seven narrators of the Ahādīth of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Number one is Abū Hurairah; five thousand plus, number two, ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar; two thousand six hundred, number three, Anas Ibn Mālik, number four, ‘Ā'ishah ؓ; two thousand two hundred. So really the differences between ranks four, three and two is not much, Abū Hurairah is the one who is outstanding, he is almost double the second place. Open any book of Fiqh; it is impossible study a book of Fiqh without going through the name of ‘Ā'ishah, her narrations and her opinions in Fiqh, in *every* Fiqh – Hanafī, Shāfi‘ī, Hanbalī, Mālikī – ‘Ā'ishah ؓ, her knowledge is there. So we have learnt so much from ‘Ā'ishah ؓ.

Destiny of Allāh ﷻ that Rasūlullāh ﷺ Marries ‘Ā'ishah ؓ

It was the destiny of Allāh that Rasūlullāh ﷺ would marry ‘Ā'ishah ؓ, and just as it was a divine inspiration to Rasūlullāh ﷺ, and maybe he did not think about it before, it was a surprise to Abū Bakr. When Rasūlullāh ﷺ went and proposed to Abū Bakr that he wants to marry his daughter, Abū Bakr As-Siddīq was surprised, he said, “I am your brother,” meaning we are very close in age, “I am your brother.” Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, “You are my brother, and your daughter is appropriate for me”. This was a command from Allāh ﷻ, and Subhān'Allāh, it was a blessing from Allāh ﷻ on this Ummah. Sometimes something would appear to be in a certain way, however if we would just dig a little bit deeper, we would see something completely different; **But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you.**[23] So we should be very proud and happy that Rasūlullāh

ﷺ married ‘Ā'ishah ؓ, and we should be thankful to Allāh that that happened, rather than having these doubts in our hearts and having this fear and inhibition; it is a blessing of Allāh ﷻ on us.

Just a final comment, Rasūlullāh ﷺ did not marry any virgin woman except ‘Ā'ishah ؓ, and Rasūlullāh ﷺ never married any woman who was young except ‘Ā'ishah ؓ; it was an exceptional case. If we want to study the marriage life of Rasūlullāh ﷺ that was initiated by him, we need to look at every wife except ‘Ā'ishah and Zainab, and you will know who were the women that Rasūlullāh ﷺ was marrying, [like] Sawdah.

Umm Habībah ؓ

Umm Habībah ؓ [was one of the wives of Rasūlullāh ﷺ], she is the one who migrated to Abyssinia, and her husband ‘Ubaidillāh Bin Jahsh converted to Christianity, and she went through a miserable time. [It was] very difficult moments on Umm Habībah, being the daughter of Abū Sufyān, the head of Quraish. So later on her husband passed away, [and] Rasūlullāh ﷺ sent a letter with ‘Amr Bin Umayyah Ad-Damrī to send to An-Najāshī, asking An-Najāshī to marry him to Umm Habībah ؓ. Because Rasūlullāh ﷺ had sympathy for what Umm Habībah went through, Rasūlullāh ﷺ wanted to marry her even though she was hundreds of miles away. The scholars say that was the furthest marriage of Rasūlullāh ﷺ; she was in Abyssinia and he was in Madīnah. So it was symbolic to first of all take care of Umm Habībah, [and] also, Umm Habībah was the daughter of Abū Sufyān, so Rasūlullāh ﷺ wanted to bring the staunchest enemies of Islām closer, he wanted to soften their stance. And when Abū Sufyān heard of the news that Rasūlullāh ﷺ married his daughter, even though Abū Sufyān was now the leader of Quraish; he was their leader in fighting Islām, Abū Sufyān was happy that this marriage took place, he said, “And who is better to marry than Muhammad ﷺ.” Abū Sufyān knew the lineage of Muhammad ﷺ so that is how he looked at it. [He was thinking] he is from Banū Hāshim, it is an honour for us to marry our daughter to someone from Banū Hāshim; our issue with him is because of religion. So he was proud and happy that his daughter got married to Muhammad ﷺ. So that softened Abū Sufyān a little bit, it brought him closer to Islām. [Alongside this,] Rasūlullāh ﷺ

also intended in taking care of Umm Habībah ﷺ in those difficult moments that she was going through.

Umm Salamah ﷺ

Another marriage [of Rasūlullāh ﷺ] would be [that of] Umm Salamah. Umm Salamah ﷺ was also one of the ones who made Hijrah to Abyssinia, then they came back and they went to Madīnah. Later on, Abū Salamah passed away, [and] Rasūlullāh ﷺ married Umm Salamah.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ – The Father of This Ummah

So he would take care of the wives of his Companions who died, and these were older women, but Rasūlullāh ﷺ is the Father of this Ummah, just like his wives are called Mothers of the Ummah. What is the name given to the wives of Rasūlullāh ﷺ? *Ummahātil Mu'mineen* – The Mothers of the Believers. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ viewed himself as a caretaker of this Ummah. Even if he does not have a direct blood-relationship with this Ummah, he still felt that he is their father. So he would take care of their needy, he would take care of the hungry, and that is the statement that [came up] in the conversation that happened between Asmā' Bint ʻUmays and ʻUmar Ibn Al-Khattāb, when ʻUmar Ibn Al-Khattāb said, "We have more rights to Rasūlullāh ﷺ than you, because we made Hijrah before you." Asmā' Bint ʻUmays had just arrived from Abyssinia. Asmā' Bint ʻUmays responded by saying, "No, that is not true. You were with Rasūlullāh ﷺ; *Yutʻimu Jāʻi'akum* – he was feeding the hungry among you, *Wa Yuʻallim Jāhilakum* – and was teaching the ignorant among you." So Rasūlullāh ﷺ was the father of this Ummah, and that is how his marriage life, even, is a reflection of that.

The History of Al-Ka'bah

The Flood

An important event occurred during the Prophethood of Muhammad ﷺ; a flood had affected the structure of Al-Ka'bah. Al-Ka'bah is located in a low valley between mountains, and Makkah was once flooded, and the flood had caused

cracks on the walls of Al-Ka'bah. So the people of Quraish felt the need to rebuild Al-Ka'bah again. Now, Al-Ka'bah in total has been built and rebuilt five or four times, depending on who was the first to build it. There is a difference of opinion on whether Ibrāhīm ﷺ was the first to build Al-Ka'bah; some scholars refer our father Ādam ﷺ as the first one to build Al-Ka'bah, however, the majority opinion is that it was Ibrāhīm ﷺ who first built it. Now, the ones who say that Ādam ﷺ was the one who built it, they say that we not contradicting Qurān because Qurān says: **And [mention] when Abraham was raising the foundations of the House and [with him] Ishmael, [saying], "Our Lord, accept [this] from us. Indeed You are the Hearing, the Knowing."**[24] They say that Qurān states that Ibrāhīm was raising the foundations of the House, meaning there was already something there for him to raise above it. So they say that the foundations of the House were established in the time of Ādam ﷺ, but the common belief among our scholars is that it was Ibrāhīm ﷺ who first built it. However, there is no dispute in the holiness of the place since the Earth was created; all of our scholars say that even if it was not Ādam who first built it, the place was sacred, was holy, and was visited by the Prophets of Allāh. So they say it used to be like a small hill which was destined as a sacred and holy place and the Ambiyā' of Allāh would visit it. And we have references of quite a few Ambiyā' visiting the House of Allāh. There is a Hadīth that states Hūd visited Al-Ka'bah, there is a Hadīth that says that Sālih visited, and Nūh. And there is a saying attributed to Rasūlullāh ﷺ that 'Īsā ﷺ, when he comes down again, when he descends to Earth in his second-coming, he will make Hajj. So it is either Ādam ﷺ or Ibrāhīm ﷺ who first built Al-Ka'bah, but we all know that it was the first House built for the remembrance of Allāh; **Indeed, the first House [of worship] established for mankind was that at Makkah - blessed and a guidance for the worlds.**[25] [It is mentioned in this verse that] the first House established for [Allāh's] worship was the one in Bakkah, Bakkah is also another name for Makkah.

First Rebuilding of Al-Ka'bah

People of Quraish Break Down Al-Ka'bah

So you have Ādam and Ibrāhīm; let us start counting from Ibrāhīm ﷺ, so [let us assume that] Ibrāhīm ﷺ was the first [to build Al-Ka'bah]. The second time [Al-

Ka'bah was built] is this time we are talking about now, when Makkah was flooded. The people of Quraish wanted to rebuild it, they gathered together and they had to tear it down, but none of them agreed to make that move. So they were all waiting, ready with their equipment around Al-Ka'bah, but no one wanted to go ahead and start breaking it down. This is how much honour and respect they had for Al-Ka'bah, even though at the time they were Mushrikīn, but they feared Allāh ﷻ and they thought that it was a dangerous thing to tear down the walls of Al-Ka'bah. And then one of them said, "I will be the first to do it," and he gathered all of his sons and they came early in the morning and they started bringing the rocks of Al-Ka'bah down and they were saying, "O Allāh, do not be afraid, all what we want is good. O Allāh, do not be afraid, all what we want is good." So you can see their false understanding of the divinity of Allāh ﷻ; they were trying to calm God by telling Him, "Do not be afraid, all what we want is good." Allāh ﷻ knows what is in your hearts, you do not have to tell Him that. So even though they believed in Allāh, but in terms of the attributes of Allāh – *Al-Asmā' Was-Sifāt*, they had some problems with them. So they brought down the walls of Al-Ka'bah. Now, it so happened that there was a Roman ship that had crashed on a port on the Red Sea close to Makkah, so they brought some of the wood on that ship. And there was a Roman builder who was on that ship, so they also had him help with the wood. So this was the first time they made the ceiling of Al-Ka'bah from wood; they used some of this wood from this ship.

People of Quraish Decide to use only Halāl Money

Now, the People of Quraish knew that money from interest was no good, and they made a decision that they were only going to use Halāl money in the rebuilding of Al-Ka'bah; they were not going to use money from interest or money from prostitution, because at the time, to show their corruptness, [prostitution was a common business]. And by the way, there is a Hadīth that is narrated by Al-Bukhārī [where] 'Ā'ishah ﵂ talks about the types of marriages that existed in Arabia, we will refer to it later on. But prostitution was something that existed, and you would have men hiring their slave-girls as an income-generating source for them, but they knew that this was not good, [yet] they would do it. They would deal with interest, but they knew that this was not

good. So they decided that they were not going to use this money in the rebuilding of Al-Ka'bah.

Al-Ka'bah was Originally Rectangular in Shape

Al-Ka'bah originally was a bit of a rectangle rather than a square, it was rectangular in shape. Because the people of Quraish ran short of funds, they ended up shortening Al-Ka'bah from one side, so they made it a square rather than a rectangle to save money. The area of Al-Ka'bah which they left out is what we refer to today as *Al-Hijr* – the enclosed area in that semi-circle. If you ever visited Al-Ka'bah, you would see that on one side of Al-Ka'bah there is a semi-circle; that used to be part of the original building of Al-Ka'bah. And Al-Ka'bah also had two gates, [and] they made it [into] one. And they raised the doorstep, so now in order to get access to the door you have to climb; the gate was made very high. Rasūlullāh ﷺ says in this Hadīth where he talks to 'Ā'ishah, "Do you not know that your people had insufficient funds for the expenses? If it were not for the fact that your people were only recently Unbelievers, I would have torn down the Ka'bah and made for it one door on the east and another on the west, and I would have included the Hijr area within it." When Rasūlullāh ﷺ opened Makkah, he was thinking about reconstructing Ka'bah on the original foundations, but then he told 'Ā'ishah that the reason I am not going to do this is because your people just became Muslim, their Islām is soft, their Īmān is weak, and it might be for a *Fitnah* for them, it might cause them a problem, if I reconstruct Al-Ka'bah. So he did not do it.

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Lesson: The Dā'iyah Needs to take the Condition of the People into Consideration

There is an important lesson to learn from this Hadīth, and that is that the Dā'iyah needs to take the condition of the people into consideration. Even though Rasūlullāh ﷺ wanted to do this, [build the Ka'bah], but he did not [do so] because he was worried that it might affect the Īmān of the people. So as a person who is calling to Islām, you need to take into consideration the condition of the people who you are directing the Message to. 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd says that if you tell the people something that is beyond their

comprehension or understanding or Īmān, it might be a trial for some of them, it might cause a backlash with some people. Sometimes we throw out information on a particular subject which is absolutely true and valid, but because the people are not ready for it yet, because their Īmān is weak, it causes a backlash with them. Some things people just are unable to grasp.

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Quraish Raised Door High to Control Access to Al-Ka'bah

Now, Rasūlullāh ﷺ said [to ʻĀ'ishah رضي الله عنها] that the reason your people Quraish made the door so high was because they wanted to have control of who would go in and out, it was an issue of power. They did not want to make the door low so that it would be accessible to anyone; they made it high so that they could control who would go in and out, it was a matter of influence, having authority. So the door of Al-Ka'bah was raised. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "If I would rebuild it, I would lower the gate and I would make for it two gates, so that people could come from one side and leave from the other," rather than having to come in and out from the same door.

Second Rebuilding of Al-Ka'bah and Placement of the Black Stone

Rasūlullāh ﷺ participated in the rebuilding of Al-Ka'bah, and at the time he was maybe around thirty five years old – that is a rough estimate. So now the people of Quraish were building Al-Ka'bah, they reached to the holiest part of Al-Ka'bah which is the Black Stone, and now a dispute erupts among them; who will have the honour to place the Black Stone in its spot? Because when they were rebuilding Al-Ka'bah, every tribe took responsibility of building one side of it, they all wanted to participate in this honour, but with the Black Stone, they disputed; every tribe wanted to have the honour of putting it in its place. Banū ʻAbd Ad-Dār gathered all of their men and they came in front of Al-Ka'bah with a pot of blood, and they placed it in front of everyone and they all stuck their hands in the blood and pulled it out. In other words, they were telling everyone that this is what will happen if we do not place the Black Stone in its place, so it is like pledging to die and to fight; we will do it, otherwise this is what will happen, blood will flow. Even though that was a drastic measure and quite a

threat, but that was not enough to deter others. Another tribe went and brought in their own pot of blood, and they started sticking their hands in and pulling them out. And then everybody was bringing their own pots of blood, and it was four or five days [and] they could not solve the problem and war was about to erupt between them. And then the eldest man among them, Umayyah, had a suggestion. He came and said, "Let us agree that the first man to walk in towards Al-Ka'bah will be given complete authority in judging between us." So they all gathered next to Al-Ka'bah and they were waiting for the first person to come, and the first person to walk in was Muhammad ﷺ. They all stood up and said, "*As-Sādiqul Amīn, Radīnā Radīnā!* – The truthful and the trustworthy, we all agree!" Now, they had already agreed that they would give complete authority to the person who would come in, but they were so happy that this person was Muhammad ﷺ because they knew that he would not be biased in his ruling. You know, it would be expected that if someone came from a particular family he would give authority to his family to place it in its place, and that was the expected thing, that we are going to leave it randomly for the first one to come in and his family would take it, but when they saw that it was Muhammad ﷺ, they were so happy because they knew his fairness, so they told him, "We give you complete authority in solving this dispute." Rasūlullāh ﷺ asked them to bring a piece of cloth, he picked up the Black Stone and he placed it on this cloth. And then he asked a representative from each clan to hold the cloth from one side [each], and then they all raised it up together at the same time, therefore every one of them would participate in lifting the Black Stone, and when they all lifted it up, then he, with his blessed hands, picked up the Black Stone and placed it in its place. So it was Rasūlullāh ﷺ who put the Black Stone in its spot. So that was the second time Al-Ka'bah was rebuilt.

Third Rebuilding of Al-Ka'bah

Rasūlullāh ﷺ opened Makkah and then he said that if it was not for the fact that the people were new Muslims, I would have rebuilt it on the foundations of Ibrāhīm. Years later, 'Abdullāh Ibn Az-Zubair became the Amīr of Makkah, [and] he knew of this Hadīth because 'Ā'ishah was his aunt. 'Abdullāh Ibn Az-Zubair's mother was Asmā' Bint Abī Bakr, the sister of 'Ā'ishah, so 'Ā'ishah was his aunt, and he was familiar with this Hadīth, so he decided to rebuild Al-Ka'bah on the original foundations, because now the people had been Muslims

for a long time, they were not new Muslims anymore, [therefore] they would be able to handle the situation. He decided that he was going to rebuild Al-Ka'bah, especially since Al-Ka'bah was burnt, because Al-Hajjāj Bin Yūsuf As-Saqafī had laid siege on Makkah. At that time there was a war between 'Abdullāh Ibn Az-Zubair and Banī Umayyah in Syria, and the army general of Banī Umayyah had laid siege on Makkah, and one of the catapults had hit Al-Ka'bah and it caused some damage and it burnt [Al-Ka'bah]. Now, that damage could have been fixed without tearing down Al-Ka'bah, but 'Abdullāh Ibn Az-Zubair wanted to take advantage and rebuild Al-Ka'bah on the original foundations, which he did, and he fulfilled the description that was given by Rasūlullāh ﷺ in the Hadīth, that he would lower the gate and have an eastern door and a western door and expand the size of Al-Ka'bah towards Al-Hijr – which he did. So that was the third time Al-Ka'bah was rebuilt.

Fourth Rebuilding of Al-Ka'bah

'Abdullāh Ibn Az-Zubair ended up losing the war and he was killed. Al-Hajjāj Ibn Yūsuf took over. The Khalīfah of that time, 'Abdul Malik Ibn Marwān, was not familiar with this Hadīth, so he gave his commands to take back Al-Ka'bah to the way it was before 'Abdullāh Ibn Az-Zubair, so Al-Ka'bah was shortened again according to the way the people of Quraish built it. After the Khilāfah of Banī Umayyah, Banū Al-'Abbās were the family of Khulafā'. One of the Khulafā' of Banī 'Abbās was thinking about rebuilding Al-Ka'bah again on the original foundations and he consulted Al-Imām Mālik. Imām Mālik told the Khalīfah, and he gave him a very wise answer, "We do not want Al-Ka'bah to be a toy in the hands of kings; they keep changing its size every now and then. Even though the plan of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and his desire was to build it on the foundations of Ibrāhīm, but let us keep it the way it is and not change it anymore." Because it was going back and forth on the foundations of Ibrāhīm, and then the way Quraish built it, and then again on the foundations of Ibrāhīm, and Imām Mālik said that the people have known Al-Ka'bah and they have known these stones the way they are; do not keep on changing it, keep it the way it is. And that was a very wise advice from Al-Imām Mālik which the Khalīfah followed.

The Ka'bah of Today is Built on the Foundations of Quraish

So the Ka'bah that we have today is built on which foundation? The foundations of Ibrāhīm or the foundations of Quraish? Quraish. But Alhumdulillāh that is something good; why? if Al-Ka'bah was built on the original foundations of Ibrāhīm, we would have been deprived the chance of praying inside Al-Ka'bah, but since it is shortened, that area which is enclosed by the semi-circle is actually part of Al-Ka'bah, so when you pray in that area, it is as if you have prayed inside Al-Ka'bah. And you know that Rasūlullāh ﷺ did pray inside Al-Ka'bah; when he opened Makkah, he prayed eight Rak'ah inside Al-Ka'bah. So now we have a chance to pray in Al-Hijr, otherwise we would have to get permission to get inside Al-Ka'bah and it would be very cumbersome and difficult, but now you can pray inside Al-Hijr and it will count as if you prayed in Al-Ka'bah.

Size of Al-Ka'bah has Always Remained Constant

Now, over the times, the height of Al-Ka'bah has increased, but the size of it has remained constant. Now, with the stones that Al-Ka'bah is built from, many of them are remnants of the original stones that were used by Ibrāhīm ﷺ, but not all of them; some other ones were introduced later by Quraish and others.

The Black Stone is the Original Stone given to Ibrāhīm ﷺ

But the Black Stone is the original stone that was used by Ibrāhīm ﷺ, the Black Stone has never changed, it is the original stone that was given to Ibrāhīm ﷺ. And there are many stories about the Black Stone itself; some say it originated from Jannah. There is a Hadīth that is authentic that says that the Black Stone was white, but then it turned black because of the sins of the sons of Ādam. And there is a Hadīth that says that the Black Stone is the Right Hand of Allāh on Earth. So the Black Stone is very special, it is very honoured, and it is very respected, and it is the only part of Al-Ka'bah that is kissed and is the only part of Al-Ka'bah that is pointed to from a distance. Some people point to the Yemeni corner which is wrong, Al-Yemeni corner you can touch it when you are passing by it, but one should not point towards it or greet [it] from a distance, that is only for the Black Stone.

So this is the history of Al-Ka'bah.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ would Spend Time in Solitude

The Prophet ﷺ would leave Makkah and spend time in the Cave of Hirā', in a mountain that is fairly close to Makkah, a few kilometers away from Makkah. Rasūlullāh ﷺ would take with him provisions – some food – and he would go and stay in seclusion, solitude, in this cave, worshiping Allāh ﷻ. And from the cave, it is said that you were able to see Al-Ka'bah in those old days. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ would spend days and nights continuously in the cave worshiping Allāh ﷻ before Prophethood, so he knew Allāh ﷻ and he was worshipping Allāh ﷻ in that cave. And this was a chance for Rasūlullāh ﷺ to do reflection and contemplation in the creation of Allāh, and this was training for him. Allāh ﷻ was training him through these moments of reflection and contemplation because they purify the heart. Sa'eed Hawwā comments on this, he says:

> "Solitude was the tradition of some who seek the guidance of Allāh with the remembrance of Allāh and worship. It was used to illuminate the hearts and remove its shadows by disconnecting it from its heedlessness and desires. Some would advise this in the beginning of the journey to belief as this was the example of Prophet ﷺ when he spent time in solitude before and at the beginning of his Apostleship."

So as a Muslim you are recommended to spend time alone in Dhikr, for example, early in the morning, after 'Asr, between 'Asr and Maghrib on Friday. So you [should] spend time alone remembering Allāh in solitude, and our scholars talked about the benefits of solitude. Now, one should not go into the extremes of leaving the society completely or immersing oneself in the society completely, he should have a middle road. So you spend some time with people socialising, but you also spend time alone between you and Allāh. Qiyām Al-Layl is a chance for solitude; praying at night alone when everyone is asleep, so it is something between you and Allāh. There is an element of sincerity there that might not exist with other 'Ibādāt that are done collectively. So now you are doing this alone, nobody can see you, you are not showing off. Who are you doing it for? You are doing it for Allāh. So it is very important for one to spend this time in solitude to purify the heart, because the scholars say that too much socialisation, too much laughing, too much attachment to Dunyā, obscures the

heart and throws veils on it, and the way to purify the heart is by spending some time worshipping Allāh ﷻ in solitude. And Allāh ﷻ says about *Tafakkur*: **Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for those of understanding. Who remember Allāh while standing or sitting or [lying] on their sides and give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth, [saying], "Our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly; exalted are You [above such a thing]; then protect us from the punishment of the Fire."** [26] So Allāh ﷻ is saying here that His servants contemplate in the creation of the heavens and Earth, and they say, 'O Allāh, You have not created this in vain, there is purpose in creation, there is wisdom in everything that exists.'

6

In Pursuit Of The Truth

The time preceding the Prophethood of Muhammad ﷺ was a time of darkness, however, there were some glimpses of light here and there, but they were too few and far in-between, and humanity was in dire need of *Hidāyah* – guidance. But again, there were some individuals here and there, scattered apart, who had a sense of right and wrong, and their hearts directed them to the truth, and we will talk about a few of these examples.

Zayd Bin ‘Amr Bin Nufayl

One of them was Zayd Bin ‘Amr Bin Nufayl. Zayd Bin ‘Amr Bin Nufayl went out in search of truth, he travelled out of Makkah searching for the truth. He was from Quraish, but he travelled around in search of guidance. So he went to the Jews and enquired about their religion, but he decided not to follow it. And then

he went to the Christians and enquired about their religion, and decided not to follow it. And then in the end he came to learn about the way of Ibrāhīm ﷺ; *Al-Hanīfiyyah* – worshipping Allāh alone, and he became a *Hanīfī* – a follower of Ibrāhīm ﷺ. Zayd Ibn 'Amr Bin Nufayl was a lone voice in this sea of darkness in Makkah. Asmā' Bint Abī Bakr said, "I have seen Zayd Bin 'Amr Bin Nufayl with his back leaning on Al-Ka'bah, and he was speaking to his people of Quraish and telling them, 'O people of Quraish! None of you is following the way of Ibrāhīm except myself.'" Because the people of Quraish used to claim that they were the inheritors of Ibrāhīm, they were the ones following his path, but Zayd Bin 'Amr Bin Nufayl would tell them [that] none of you is following the true path of Ibrāhīm ﷺ other than me. Asmā', the daughter of Abū Bakr, said, "I saw Zayd Bin 'Amr Bin Nufayl leaning his back against the Ka'bah saying, 'O tribe of Quraish! By Him in whose Hand is Zayd's soul, not one of you apart from myself follows the religion of Ibrāhīm.' He would also say, 'O God! If only I knew the way most favoured by You, I would worship you by it, but I do not know.'"

Subhān'Allāh, he believed in Allāh, he knew the truth, but he did not know how to apply it, how to worship Allāh ﷻ, he did not have a *Sharī'ah* to follow. He has the belief, he has the faith, and he wants to pray to Allāh ﷻ, but he does not know how. And there are people like Zayd in every time, people whose hearts guide them to the truth. They know that there is no God but one, and they want to worship Allāh ﷻ, but they have not been exposed to the way [in which] to do it. And in fact, some reverts have been through such an experience. I know of one brother who later on became a Muslim, he became a Muslim at the age of forty, he used to say that in my heart I knew that Allāh is one and Allāh had no son, and I would not drink and I would not eat pork because I thought that these are not good, and I would avoid the sins that people would participate in; I felt that in my heart, and I wanted to pray to Allāh ﷻ, but I would not know how, until I learnt about Islām. So here you have Zayd Ibn 'Amr Bin Nufayl going through the same experience, he is saying, 'O Allāh I want to pray to you but I do not know how,' and we will talk about Abū Dharr who has some similar words. It is amazing to see how many things Zayd knew by his natural disposition. For example, he would not participate in the killing of girls that existed in Makkah, in fact, whenever he heard about a father [who was] about to kill his daughter, he would go to that father and say, "Give her to me, I will take

care of her." So he would adopt all of these girls and raise them up. It says here, "He would give life back to girls about to be killed at birth, telling a man wishing to kill his daughter, 'Do not kill her, give her to me to look after. When she grows up, you can take her back, or if you wish, give her to me.'" So he would raise up these daughters and then go back to the father and say, 'If you want her back, here she is, otherwise I would still take care of her.' He used to refuse to eat the meat that was slaughtered in Makkah. It mentions that once a meal was presented to Rasūlullāh ﷺ; some meat, Rasūlullāh ﷺ refused it and he passed it over, so it was given to Zayd Bin 'Amr Bin Nufayl. Zayd Bin 'Amr Bin Nufayl said, "I do not eat from this meat which you slaughter for your Gods." In fact, there is a quotation by him, he would go to the people of Quraish and he would criticise them for slaughtering their beasts in the names of their gods, he would say, "Sheep were created by God, and He brings down from the skies the water that makes vegetation grow for them from the Earth, so why do you slaughter them in the name of gods other than Allāh, denying all that and venerating them?" He said that Allāh is the one who created these cattle and you know that, and Allāh is the one who is bringing down rain for them, and then you are slaughtering them in the name of other gods?

Now, Zayd Bin 'Amr Bin Nufayl died prior to the Prophethood of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. His son Sa'eed was one of the Believers, and he is one of the ten who were given the glad-tidings of Jannah; Sa'eed Bin Zayd. Sa'eed Bin Zayd went to Rasūlullāh ﷺ and enquired about his father, he wanted to know what will be the fate of his father, because he had died before Prophethood. Rasūlullāh ﷺ told Sa'eed, "Your father will come on the Day of Judgment as a nation alone." Rasūlullāh ﷺ had given Zayd Bin 'Amr glad-tidings of Jannah, and he also mentioned that on the Day of Judgment, Zayd Bin 'Amr Bin Nufayl will be standing as a nation by himself. On the Day of Judgment people are going to be divided into nations, and every nation is led by a Prophet, so you will have the nation of Nūh, the nation of Mūsā, the nation of 'Īsā, the nation of Ibrāhīm ﷺ, and you will have the nation of Muhammad ﷺ. Because Zayd Bin 'Amr Bin Nufayl was not part of a particular nation of a Prophet, he will come on the Day of Judgment as his own nation, he will be standing alone. And that is also an honour for Zayd Bin 'Amr Bin Nufayl that he is standing on the Day of Judgment alone and Allāh ﷻ will grant him Jannah, because he knew the truth and he worshipped Allāh ﷻ the best he could.

Waraqah Bin Naufal

Another example is Waraqah Bin Naufal. Waraqah Bin Naufal was the cousin of Khadījah ﵂. Waraqah Bin Naufal was a Christian, and he was a lettered man, and he used to copy some of the scripture of the Christians and study from it, and he had some of these scrolls, and he was a believer in one God; he was a believer in Allāh ﷻ. And again, there were some Christians here and there who still believed in the Oneness of Allāh ﷻ and they would not attribute divinity to ʻĪsā ﵇, [and] Waraqah Bin Naufal was one of them. And Waraqah Bin Naufal was the one Khadījah consulted when Rasūlullāh ﷺ first received the Revelation. Immediately after that, Waraqah Bin Naufal passed away, so people were wondering what would happen to Waraqah Bin Naufal, and some of them were saying Waraqah Bin Naufal is in Hellfire because he died before Rasūlullāh ﷺ started preaching the Message. Even though Rasūlullāh had received the Message, but he had not started preaching it yet, and Waraqah Bin Naufal died before that, so they said that he would be in Hellfire. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "I have seen him in a dream and he was wearing white clothes. If he was a man in Hellfire, he would not be wearing white clothes." Later on Rasūlullāh ﷺ saw another dream, and Rasūlullāh ﷺ saw that Waraqah Bin Naufal had two gardens in Paradise. So he was in Jannah, because he had the true belief, he had the right belief.

Salmān Al-Fārsī ﵁

Now, the next example is a long one, it is the story of Salmān Al-Fārsī ﵁.

Salmān Al-Fārsī Follows the Religion of Al-Majūsiyah

Ibn ʻAbbās ﵄ went to Salmān Al-Fārsī in his old age and he requested Salmān to tell him his story, so Salmān is now narrating his story to Ibn ʻAbbās ﵄. He says, "I was a Persian man from Isfahān," Isfahān is in current day Iran, "from a village called Gee, and my father was the headman of the village, and I was striving and taking pain in the religion of *Al-Majūsiyah.*" Al-Majūsiyah I think is translated as Magian, it is a religion where they believe in good and evil and they worship fire. So they believe that there are two forces that are fighting good and evil; it is a form of Shirk considered to be *Wathāniyah*, it is not part of

Ahl Al-Kitāb. So Salmān Al-Fārsī says, "I took pains to be a good Magian," and he grew in the religion until he became the 'Keeper of the Fire' – he was the one who would light the fire and then never let it go off. So they had this fire; in every village they would have [it] in the Temple of Fire, and the fire needed to be kept by a certain person to ensure that it was always burning, and that was supposed to be a high position in their religion; to be the Keeper of the Fire, the one who is entrusted with the fire.

Salmān Al-Fārsī Discovers a Church

He said, "My father owned a large farm. One day he was busy constructing a building of his and he wanted me to go out and take care of business in the farm." But Salmān Al-Fārsī says, "My father loved me *so* much, he closeted me in his house and would never let me leave." So Salmān Al-Fārsī says, "On that particular day, my father was busy with this building of his and he wanted me to go and take care of some business in his farm, but then he told me, 'O my son, you know how dear you are to me. If you are late, then I will be so concerned about you. And you are more important to me than the farm or my building, so please come early.'" Salmān Al-Fārsī literally said, "I was kept in his house like a slave-girl, he would not allow me to go anywhere." Salmān Al-Fārsī left on that day to go and do this business for his father, he said, "I passed by a church for Christians and I heard them pray, so I wanted to go and investigate. I did not know much about people because I never left home, so this was something new to me and I came to realise that there is another religion and some people are praying in a different fashion, so I decided to go in and investigate. I went into the church and I was quite impressed by their method of prayer, I ended up staying with them until sunset and I neglected my father's work." He said, "My father was so worried, he started sending out people to find me. I came back late and my father said, 'O my son, did I not tell you not to be late? What happened?'" Salmān Al-Fārsī said, "I passed next to a church of Christians and I went in to see their prayer, and I forgot to do the job you asked me to." His father told him, "O my son, their religion is no good, and your religion and the religion of your forefathers is better." Salmān Al-Fārsī responded to his father and said, "No, their religion is better than ours." So now the father of Salmān Al-Fārsī was extremely worried, he ended up chaining his son and imprisoning him at home; he put chains on his legs. He was so terrified and afraid that his

son might change his religion that he ended up locking him up at home. When Salmān Al-Fārsī was at the Church, he asked the church members, "Where is the centre of your religion?" [Meaning] where did this religion originate from. So they said, "From the Holy land," [meaning] from Falastīn, from Ash-Shām. Now, when his father put him in shackles, he managed to send out a message to the Church telling them, "If you ever receive or know of a caravan that is in town from Ash-Shām, let me know." So a caravan did come in and they sent him word. Salmān Al-Fārsī was able to release himself and run away, and he went with this caravan all the way to the Holy Land in search of the truth.

Salmān Al-Fārsī Travels to Ash-Shām in Search of Truth

Salmān arrived in Syria, and he asked [them], "Who is the most learned man that you have in this religion?" He wanted to go and study under the greatest. He was told, "Go to a bishop in this particular church." He went to the Bishop and he told him, "This is my situation; I came all the way [from Isfahān], I want to study from you." So the Bishop told him, "You are welcome, you can stay with me." So he ended up staying with the Bishop in the church, living there. Salmān Al-Fārsī said, "This man used to ask the people to donate, to give alms, charity, and then he would end up keeping it for himself." Rather than distributing it to the poor, he would keep it to himself. Salmān Al-Fārsī said, "He was such an evil man and I hated him so much, nevertheless I remained with him." And then when he died, the Christians of that Church wanted to have a burial for him, and Salmān Al-Fārsī went and told them, "This was an evil man." They said, "How you dare say that?" He said, "I will show you the proof," and Salmān Al-Fārsī took them to the place where this man used to hide all of the money, and he pulled out seven containers filled with gold and silver; this man was ripping off the people and keeping the money for himself. Salmān Al-Fārsī said, "The people were so angered, they ended up crucifying his dead body and stoning him."

And then they appointed someone in his place. Now, Salmān Al-Fārsī says about this particular man, "Then they brought another man to take his place, and I never saw a man who did not attend the five Prayers, who was better than he, nor more ascetic, nor more enthusiastic about the Afterlife, nor more devoted both day and night. I loved him as I had never loved before." So now a truly pious person took his place. Salmān Al-Fārsī ended up spending time with this

man, learning from him, studying the Religion, worshipping in the church, but then death started approaching this man; he was already at old age. Salmān Al-Fārsī said, "I went to him when he was on his deathbed and I told him, 'You know my story and how I came all the way to study this religion, and now since the decree of Allāh is befalling you, who do you entrust me to, who would you recommend for me to continue my study?'" He told him, "My son, I do not know anyone who has done as I have – people have either died or changed or abandoned most of their prior practices – except for one man in Mosul, he practices as I did, so join him."

Salmān Al-Fārsī Travels to 'Irāq, Nasībīn and Turkey in Search of Truth

So now Salmān Al-Fārsī is going to travel all the way from Ash-Shām – Falastīn or Syria – to 'Irāq, Al-Mosul, in search of knowledge. The Bishop died and Salmān Al-Fārsī embarked on that journey, and he went to this Bishop of Al-Mosul and he told him his story, and he said, "You were recommended to me by the Bishop in Ash-Shām. Will you accept me to be with you?" He said, "Yes, of course, you can be my student." So Salmān Al-Fārsī spent time with him. But this person was also an old man and he was approaching death, so after a short while he was dying, so Salmān Al-Fārsī told him, "I came to this person and he recommended you to me, and now you are passing away, who do you recommend?" He told him, "I do not know of anyone who is following this same path of ours except the Bishop of Nasībīn." And now Salmān Al-Fārsī was travelling all the way from Mosul to Nasībīn. And he went to the Christian man in Nasībīn and he told him the story, "I went from this person to this person and now I ended up coming to you," and he spent time with the Bishop of Nasībīn. But then this man was approaching death too, you see, this was a dying breed; they were dying one after another and they were leaving no one behind them to carry on the torch. He went to the scholar in Nasībīn, he spent time with him, and he was dying, and when he was dying he said, "I do not know of anyone who is following our way except a man in 'Amūriyah," in Byzantine, Turkey. So now Salmān Al-Fārsī was travelling all the way to Turkey.

The Scholar of ‘Amūriyah advises Salmān to wait for the Emergence of the Prophet ﷺ

Over there in ‘Amūriyah, in addition to his studies and participation in the worship services, Salmān Al-Fārsī started a business, and he accumulated enough wealth to purchase some sheep and cows. When death was approaching his teacher in ‘Amūriyah, Salmān Al-Fārsī asked him, “Who do you recommend me to study with?” He responded and said, “My son, I do not know anyone who is as we were to whom to send you to. But the time is near for a Prophet being sent with Ibrāhīm’s religion who will come forth in the land of the Arabs, he will move to refuge to somewhere with date palms growing between two scorched rocky plains, he has signs that are unmistakable, he eats things given to him as gifts but not alms, and between his shoulders there is the Seal of Prophethood. If you can go there, do so.” So now the scholar of ‘Amūriyah is saying that there is no one living today who is following this same path; the ones who believe in the true Message of Jesus, they have all passed away. Therefore, [he was told that] it is time for a new Message to come, because now the world is void of guidance, so now it is time to fill that void. So a Prophet will come, and he is approaching, and his time is near, and he has unmistakeable signs, and these are his signs; number one, he will take refuge in a place that grows palm trees and is between two rocky tracks, i.e. volcanic rocks. [Number two], he does not eat *Sadaqah* – charity, but he accepts gifts. And [number three], there is the Seal of Prophethood, a sign, between his shoulders on his back.

Salmān Al-Fārsī gets Sold as a Slave on his way to Madīnah

Salmān Al-Fārsī said, “I was trying to find a way to reach the land of the Arabs,” it was far away, “until I met some merchants from the tribe of Kalb. I asked them to carry me with them and I will pay them all of the money that I have; my cows and my sheep are yours, just take me to the land of the Arabs.” Allāhu Akbar, look at the sacrifice of Salmān. He worked very hard to build up this small business and accumulate this wealth, and now he was willing to give it up just to be transported to the land of the Nabï. The story of Salmān Al-Fārsī is an amazing story of someone who is searching for *Al-Haqīqah* – truth. They [the merchants] agreed, and they carried Salmān Al-Fārsī with them. When they reached to Arabia, to a place called Wādī Al-Qurā, these merchants ended up

betraying Salmān Al-Fārsī and they sold him as a slave to a Jewish man. Now, if you get stuck into slavery, that is it, you are stuck in there, and nobody will believe you when you say that you are a free man. So they claimed that he was a slave and they ended up selling him, so now Salmān Al-Fārsī was stuck in bondage. They sold him to this Jewish man; this Jewish man took him to Wādī Al-Qurā. Salmān Al-Fārsī said, "When he saw Wādī Al-Qurā, I thought this might be the place that was described to me," because Wādī Al-Qurā has some palm trees, so he was fine to stay there. He said, "Then a cousin of my owner, a Jew from Banī Qurayzah, visited my master and he purchased me." So now Salmān was sold from this man in Wādī Al-Qurā to a Jew in Banū Qurayzah. Where did Banū Qurayzah live? In Madīnah. Salmān Al-Fārsī said, "I was carried from Wādī Al-Qurā to Madīnah, and in the name of Allāh, as soon as I saw Madīnah, I knew this was the place." This is it, because Madīnah is very rich with palm groves, it has a lot of palm trees, and it is located between two rocky tracks*; Al Hārrah Al-Sharqiyyah Wal Hārrah Al-Gharbiyyah*. These are two rocky tracks of volcanic rocks, scorched, very dark. And by the way, this was the natural protection of Madīnah; in the Battle of the Trench, did Rasūlullāh ﷺ make a trench all over Madīnah? No, he dug the trench on one side only because on two sides Madīnah was protected by these rocky tracks. These are not mountains, these are very sharp rocks that are filling the plain and these are volcanic rocks, and it is very difficult for an army to move through it, so these are two natural barriers. And then from the south, Madīnah is protected by palm trees; that is where all of the palm groves are. So Madīnah can be attacked from the North; that is the direction where the attack could be made from, and that is where Rasūlullāh ﷺ had dug the trench. So Salmān Al-Fārsī knew this was the place. He said, "Rasūlullāh ﷺ was sent, and he spent years in Makkah and I had no idea about it because I was busy in the toils of slavery." You know, a slave is busy with work and does not have any idea on what is going on around him and the world, so Salmān Al-Fārsī said, "I had no idea that Rasūlullāh ﷺ was already preaching the Message."

Salmān Al-Fārsī Meets Rasūlullāh ﷺ and Tests him on Signs of his Prophethood

Salmān Al-Fārsī said, "One day, I was working on top of a palm tree and my master was sitting under the palm tree. One of his cousins came to him and he

was angry, you could see anger on his face, and he said, "May God damn the children of Qaylah!" Children of Qaylah was the name given to Al-Aws Wal-Khazraj, the Jews used to call Al-Aws Wal-Khazraj Banū Qaylah. He said, "May God damn them, they have assembled in Qubā' in support of a man who came from Makkah who claims to be a prophet." Salmān Al-Fārsī said, "When I heard that, a chill went down my spine and I started to tremble, and I was almost going to fall down from the palm tree and land on my master." Ya'nī Subhān'Allāh! Salmān Al-Fārsī had been waiting for this moment for years; he had given up his life, he had left his family, left his homeland and came into foreign lands, different languages, different cultures, different people! In those days it was not easy to travel and go amongst people who were foreign, it is not like today [where] you can have interpreters and translators and access to people who would speak your language, in those days it was very difficult. Salmān Al-Fārsī had to leave Persia, and then he went to Ash-Shām, and then he went to Turkey, and 'Irāq, and now he was in the land of the Arabs which was a very secluded area. The land of the Arabs was surrounded by deserts, it did not have contact with the outside world; the Persians were away from it, the Romans were away from it, it was a very secluded, very difficult, very harsh. And then Salmān Al-Fārsī was living alone as a slave! Imagine the feelings of home-sickness that such a person would have. Sold as a slave, living in a foreign land, and now he has heard the news he had been waiting for for years. He said, "I came running down the tree and I went to the man and I was asking him questions." He said, "My master grabbed me and punched me in my face and told me, 'It is none of your business, go back to work.'" Salmān Al-Fārsī said, "Later on that evening, I prepared some food and I travelled to Qubā'." Qubā' was outside Madīnah, Qubā' is on the outskirts of Madīnah and that is where Rasūlullāh ﷺ first arrived and he built the Masjid of Qubā'. Now it is pretty much in the district of Madīnah, but in those days it was considered to be of an independent village. Salmān Al-Fārsī said, "I took some food with me and I went to visit Rasūlullāh ﷺ at night. I came in and I told Muhammad ﷺ, 'I heard that you are a very good man, and that you have Companions who are strangers and needy, so I have brought you this food as charity, and I think that you are the one who deserves it most.' And I handed it to him." He said, "Rasūlullāh ﷺ received the food from me and then he told his Companions to go ahead and eat, but he did not join in with them." Sign number one; he ﷺ does not eat charity,

he does not eat from alms. He said, "Now test one is done. Later on, I prepared some food and I went to Rasūlullāh ﷺ and he was already on his way to Madīnah. I went up to him, I greeted him and then I told him, 'Last time I presented you with food and I told you that this is charity and you refused to eat from it, so I want to honour you with this gift,' and I handed the food to Muhammad ﷺ. Muhammad ﷺ invited the Companions to come in and eat and he joined in with them." Sign number two. He said, "And then I went to him and visited him when he was in *Baqī' Al-Gharqad* – Cemetery of Madīnah, he was following a Janāzah. I went up to Mohammed ﷺ, I greeted him, and then I went around him to see the sign on his back." Salmān Al-Fārsī said, "Rasūlullāh ﷺ sensed that I was trying to look for something that was described for me, so Rasūlullāh ﷺ uncovered his back, he threw off the cloak that was covering his shoulders. And right there in front of my eyes was the Seal of Prophethood." Sign number three. Salmān Al-Fārsī said, "When I saw the seal of Prophethood on his back, I fell down and I prostrated myself to Muhammad ﷺ, I made Sujūd to him, and I started kissing his feet and I was crying." That was the moment that Salmān Al-Fārsī had been waiting all of his life for, so he made Sujūd to Muhammad ﷺ and he was kissing his feet and weeping, crying. He said, "Rasūlullāh ﷺ immediately told me to stand up." Rasūlullāh ﷺ does not accept Sujūd for him, so he told Salmān to stand up. [Salmān continues,] "And then he told me, 'Tell me your story,' so I narrated my story to him. Rasūlullāh ﷺ told me, 'I want you to narrate this same story to my Companions, I want you to tell them this story.'" The story of a man who was searching for truth all of his life. Salmān Al-Fārsī said, "And I narrated my story to them just like I am narrating it to you Ibn 'Abbās." I was mentioning to them the same thing.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ and the Sahābah رضي الله عنهم Help Salmān Al-Fārsī Free Himself

Salmān Al-Fārsī said, "Because I was a slave, I ended up missing the Battle of Badr and the Battle of Uhud. And then Rasūlullāh ﷺ told me one day, 'O Salmān, free yourself from slavery – *Kātib*.'" *Mukātabah* was a deal that was made by the slave and the master that the slave would work for a certain time and generate a certain income and ransom themselves. So Salmān Al-Fārsī went to his owner and said, "I want to be free," so his owner told him, "You have to plant for me three hundred palm trees and they all have to survive, so at the end

I have to have three hundred living palm trees, and you pay me forty ounces of gold." So he came to Rasūlullāh ﷺ and said, "This is the huge amount of money that I have to pay to ransom myself." Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "Do not worry," and then Rasūlullāh ﷺ gathered the Sahābah and told them, "Help your brother." Salmān Al-Fārsī said, "Some of them would bring thirty seedlings of a palm tree, some of them would bring twenty, some fifteen; everyone would bring as much as they can, until I had three hundred seedlings." Rasūlullāh ﷺ told him, "When you collect the three hundred seedlings, go and dig the holes for them, but do not plant them, come and tell me first." So Salmān Al-Fārsī gathered the three hundred seedlings, he went and he dug the holes for them, and then he went to Rasūlullāh ﷺ and said, "It is all ready." Salmān Al-Fārsī said, "Rasūlullāh ﷺ, by himself, would go and carry the seedlings and plant them one by one with his own blessed hands." Salmān Al-Fārsī said, "None of those three hundred palm trees died, they all survived." Now, the ratio of palm trees that end up growing is usually a small ratio, many of them die at a young age because of their fragility and the heat of the desert and the difficult weather, but Rasūlullāh ﷺ wanted to do it himself so that they would survive, so he planted them one by one and they all lived.

So now Salmān Al-Fārsī had to pay forty ounces of gold, and he had no clue where he was going to get that amount of money from. Later on one day, a small amount of gold was given to Rasūlullāh ﷺ, so the Messenger of Allāh said, "Where is your Persian brother? – *Ayna Akhākum Al-Fārisī?*" So they went and called Salmān Al-Fārsī. Rasūlullāh ﷺ told him, "Take this gold and free yourself with it." Salmān Al-Fārsī said, "O Rasūlullāh, what would this do?" When Salmān saw the amount of gold, it appeared to be very small and [he thought] it would not be sufficient. Rasūlullāh ﷺ told him, "Take it, and it will be enough." Salmān Al-Fārsī said, "I took it and it was weighed and it came out forty ounces exactly." He said, "And then I was free and I never missed anything with Rasūlullāh ﷺ after that." And the first battle he participated in was? Al-Khandaq. And we all know his participation in it; he was the one who came up with the idea of the trench.

So that is the story of Salmān Al-Fārsī ؓ.

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Lessons

A few notes on his story:

Do Not Give Up in Pursuing the Truth

Who was the first man Salmān Al-Fārsī ended up studying with? He was the Bishop in Syria. What did Salmān Al-Fārsī say about him? He said, "So I joined him, but he was an evil man, demanding alms from his people, and whatever they collected he would store away for himself and not give to the poor. Eventually, he had gathered seven jars of gold and silver. I hated him mightily for what I saw him doing." So here we have someone who is in search of the truth, and he ends up meeting a person who has all the qualifications of turning him away, of making him give up, but the zeal that Salmān Al-Fārsī had was stronger than that. Nowadays we say that sometimes our actions as Muslims is what causes the people to turn away from Islām, well that is true to a certain extent, but if someone is sincere in their search of finding the truth, they should realise and understand that the truth is something and what the people are doing is something else. Salmān Al-Fārsī did not reject Christianity because the man he met was such a corrupt person; he stuck with him and he remained, and then Allāh ﷻ rewarded him for that later on, he ended up being with the best man that he had ever seen, and in the description of that man what did he say? He said, "Then they brought another man to take his place, and I never saw a man who did not attend the five Prayers who was better than he." What Salmān Al-Fārsī means by a man who did not attend the five daily Prayers is that this is the best man I have ever seen before meeting the Muslims, before the followers of Muhammad ﷺ, because they are the ones who pray five times a day. So he [actually] said, "The best person I met, the most righteous and pious person I met, before I met the Sahābah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, was this man." Allāh rewarded him for his *Sabr* – patience, and we learn two things from this:

Number One: Allāh will grant Guidance to the ones who Search for it

Allāh ﷻ says: **And those who are guided - He increases them in guidance and gives them their righteousness.**[27] The ones who search for guidance,

Allāh will give it to them, but you have to look for it, you have to put in some effort, and when you do, the reward that you get is more than what you put in; if you walk towards Allāh, Allāh will run towards you, if you take one step towards Allāh, Allāh will take many steps towards you, but you have to take that first step, you have to take it. Salmān Al-Fārsī was searching for it and he got it, Allāh ﷻ ended up guiding him even though he belonged to a land that was hundreds of miles away, but he ended up receiving the truth because of his sincerity.

Number Two: We Should Not be Turned Off or Let Down when we See People Doing Wrong

We should not feel turned off or let down when we see someone who is not doing the right thing; that is something that has nothing to do with the Message itself. And Salmān Al-Fārsī realised that and he remained with the man until he died, and then he ended up being with a better person.

There Will Always Remain True Believers

The second note is that there were remnants of true Believers before the time of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, but they were dying and they were not leaving anyone behind, and that was why the world was thirsty for the Message of Muhammad ﷺ.

The Muslim Community Must be Supportive of its New Members

The third lesson to learn is that the Muslim community must be supportive of its new members. Rasūlullāh ﷺ helped Salmān Al-Fārsī free himself from slavery, and he requested the Sahābah to pitch in and participate. As Muslims living in the West, it would become a duty among us to take care of the needs of the newcomers to the Religion, and many times these needs would be financial, and they need to be helped, and this is part of Da'wah, because Da'wah is not that you throw out words which are free to give – it does not cost you anything – Da'wah is also that you have to be responsible for the people who will join in your ranks. And notice that many of the early Muslims were people who were in need; Bilāl ﷺ was freed by Abū Bakr. Many of the early Muslims were slaves who were in need of a lot of financial help because they were thrown away by their masters, or you would have for example someone like Mus'ab Bin 'Umair

who came from a very wealthy family, but his mother refused to give him *anything* after he became Muslim. So these members are in need of support in their initial stages, and the risk is that if they do not get help in those critical stages, they could apostatise[28]. And there was a study that was done in America that found that quite a significant number of reverts end up leaving Islām, quite a large number. I do not remember the exact figure, but a lot of them end up leaving Islām because of the difficulties that they face. First of all, many of them are stripped from their social life; their families neglect them, their friends leave them, so they are in need of a social belonging, they have to have a new association. Number two, many of them come with some dire financial needs, and if they do not get them, you know, a human being is a human being, if the belly is going empty [then you will forget everything], like I mentioned in the Hadīth [where] Rasūlullāh ﷺ said [to] do the good deeds before seven things could happen, and one of them is poverty that will make you forget. If your stomach is empty, you will forget everything. A person who is going around hungry cannot think about spirituality and learning *'Ilm* – knowledge; a person in that stage would want to feed their stomach. So these are things that are part of our programme of Da'wah, we have to have institutions that would satisfy and fulfil the needs of the new Muslim, and that is part of our duty as Muslims living in Non-Muslim societies where there are people who are embracing Islām.

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The Glad-Tidings

We will move on to the next subject, and we are going to talk about some of the glad-tidings of the coming of Muhammad ﷺ before his Prophethood.

Jews Reject Muhammad ﷺ

[There is] this Hadīth which is mentioned by Ibn Ishāq, the one who is stating this Hadīth is Salamah Bin Salām Bin Waqsh, he says, "We had a Jewish neighbour from Banū 'Abdil Ash'hal, and he came out of his house one day to us. At that time, I was the youngest of my household, I was wearing a fur gown I had and was lying in it in the courtyard of my family's house. The Jew talked about the Resurrection, the Day of Judgement, the Reckoning, the Scales, Paradise and Hellfire; this he told to Polytheists/Idolaters who did not believe in

any life after death. They replied, 'Come on now, you really think people can be sent after their death to some place where there is a Paradise and a Fire where they will be punished for their deeds?' 'Yes indeed,' he replied, 'And by Him by whom oaths are sworn, anyone going into that Fire would prefer being placed in the hottest oven in the house and having it covered over him, and he being let out of it only next day.' Then they said, 'Good Gracious! But what proof is there?' they asked. He said, 'A Prophet is being sent from the hereabouts in these lands,' and he gestured over towards Makkah and Yemen. 'When will we see him?' they inquired. He looked over at me, I being the youngest one there, and he said, 'If this lad lives a normal lifespan, he will live to this time.'" Salamah said, "And a day and a night had scarcely passed thereafter until God sent the Messenger of Allāh who lived among us, and so we believed in him, but he the Jew disbelieved in him out of evil and envy."

So this Jewish man who was studied, he learnt from his books, learnt from the old scripture that there is a Prophet who will be sent from the direction of Makkah, and that there is Hellfire and Paradise, and he knew that the time was approaching and it was very near, however, when the Prophet was sent, this man refused to follow him out of envy. And there are many narrations similar to this of Jews knowing that the time of Muhammad ﷺ has approached. In fact, the Jews who were in Madīnah, as we mentioned, were there because they were expecting the Prophet; that was the whole reason behind them settling in Madīnah. And they used to tell the Arabs of Madīnah, Al-Aws Wal-Khazraj, they used to tell them whenever they would have a disupte that one day there is going to be a Prophet sent among us, and when that happens we are going to kill you like the people of 'Ād were killed. And Subhān'Allāh, that was a preparation for Al-Aws Wal-Khazraj, because Al-Aws Wal-Khazraj used to hear this from the Jews [and] they were aware unlike the other Arabs, they were aware that a Prophet was coming. So when they met Muhammad ﷺ in Makkah, they immediately believed, because they knew that this was the person the Jews were talking about. In fact, what they said in that meeting – when they met with Rasūlullāh ﷺ on the first day – they went back to their tents and they said, "This is the man the Jews have been threatening us with, let us follow him first." Let us be the first to follow him, let us not let the Jews beat us to him. So they were in fact in a hurry to believe because they wanted to be the first. But then *Al-Yahūd* refused to follow Muhammad ﷺ.

Glad-Tidings of Muhammad ﷺ in the Bible

We will talk about some of the glad-tidings of Muhammad ﷺ in the present day Bible. Obviously the Bible went through a series of developments and changes, so not all of the glad-tidings that were there exist, but still there is a sufficient number [of glad-tidings] in the Bible that should be an indication to current day People of the Book to follow the Message of Muhammad ﷺ.

Prophecy of Muhammad ﷺ in the Book of Deuteronomy

There is a verse in Deuteronomy, it is verse 18:18, this verse states: **I God will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren like unto thee (Moses), and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.** Now, this prophecy fits Muhammad ﷺ like a glove; exactly, and it fits no one else. The verse starts by saying that **I God will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren like unto thee (Moses)**, so Allāh is saying that Allāh will send a Prophet who is like Moses.

Resemblances between Mūsā ﷺ and Muhammad ﷺ

Now, who was the Prophet who resembled Moses the most? The Christians claim that this is talking about Jesus, so let us see who resembles Mūsā more, Muhammad ﷺ or ʻĪsā.

Number One: Moses had parents, Muhammad ﷺ had parents, while ʻĪsā had only a mother. So that is the first similarity between Mūsā and Muhammad which is not shared by ʻĪsā – Jesus ﷺ.

Number Two: Both Moses and Muhammad ﷺ had children, while Jesus never had children.

Number Three: Moses was born in a natural way, Muhammad ﷺ was born in a natural way, while ʻĪsā ﷺ was born in a miraculous fashion; he was born without a father.

Number Four: Mūsā was accepted by his nation, and Muhammad ﷺ was accepted by his nation, while Jesus was rejected by his nation, so that is another resemblance. It says in the Bible: **He [Jesus] came unto his own, but**

his own received him not.[29] He was sent to the Jews and the Jews rejected him, while Mūsā was sent to the Jews and overall they accepted him, and Muhammad ﷺ was sent to his people and they accepted him.

Number Five: Moses and Muhammad ﷺ were rulers on Earth, while ʻĪsā ﷺ was not, and when we say rulers, [we mean] they had the power to inflict capital punishment. We know in our Sharīʻah that only the *Sultān* can enforce *Hudūd*, right? The Hudūd, which is the capital punishment and the other forms of punishment, cannot be done by a scholar or any [other] Muslim, they have to be done by the Sultān, by the ruler. Both Muhammad ﷺ and Mūsā had that power, for example, with Mūsā there is an incident when the Jews brought before Mūsā an Israelite who had been caught collecting firewood on the Sabbath, so Mūsā had him stoned to death – that is in Numbers, 15:36. So Mūsā did stone a person to death, and Muhammad ﷺ did apply punishment when the woman came to him professing adultery, but with ʻĪsā ﷺ, when they brought him a case of a crime, he refused to inflict punishment and he said: "**My kingdom is not of this world."** My kingdom is not of this world; I am not a ruler here. And this is in John, 18:36. So now we have pointed out five similarities.

Number Six: Muhammad ﷺ came with a new law; the law of Qurān, Mūsā ﷺ came with a new law, and that is the law of the Torāh, while ʻĪsā ﷺ – Jesus, came to follow the law of Mūsā ﷺ. He says in one verse: **"I came to follow the Law, jot by jot, dot by dot, letter by letter."** And he also said in Matthew 5, verses 17-18, **"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them, for truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished."** [Meaning] I came to fulfil the law of Mūsā ﷺ. So these are six points of similarity. Subhān'Allāh, the resemblance between Muhammad ﷺ and Mūsā is striking.

Number Seven: Mūsā has led his people in Hijrah in a mass exodus out of Egypt to the Holy Land, Muhammad ﷺ has led his people in Hijrah, while ʻĪsā ﷺ had never left his land and never made Hijrah. And one of the most important events to us Muslims in the history of Rasūlullāh ﷺ was Hijrah, and

that is why it is the beginning of our calendar, that is where we start counting history from, so it is a very important event. And to the Jews, the Hijrah of Banī Isrā'īl out of Egypt is a very important event to them, in fact, many of their celebrations are based on that event. So this is a very important point of similarity between Muhammad ﷺ and Mūsā.

Number Eight: Both Mūsā ﷺ and Muhammad ﷺ were victorious against their enemies; Moses won against Fir'aun, and Muhammad ﷺ won against the ones who fought him, while 'Īsā has never won in the worldly sense, he has never won in a battle in this world. In fact, the Christians believe that he was killed; this is not a belief that we share with them, but this is where they stand. So that is point number eight.

Number Nine: Mūsā ﷺ died a natural death, Muhammad ﷺ died a natural death, the Christians believe that Jesus was killed, while the Muslims believe that he was elevated, so either way it was not a natural death.

Number Ten: Both Mūsā ﷺ and Muhammad ﷺ are buried in the ground, while the Christians believe Jesus was buried and then resurrected, while the Muslims believe he was never buried to start with.

Number Eleven: [This] is a similarity that we can bring up according to the Christian belief [i.e. we can use a belief of the Christians to prove them wrong]. Most Christians claim that Jesus is God, and the reason why we could use this as an evidence is because they are the ones who are claiming that Jesus is similar to Moses, so we can bring up the point; how do you believe that he is God and then you say he was similar to Mūsā who was a Prophet? While the Muslims say that Muhammad ﷺ was a Prophet.

Number Twelve: When did Muhammad ﷺ become a Prophet? At the age of forty. When did Mūsā ﷺ become a Prophet? At the age of forty, and that is stated in the Bible. And the Bible states that 'Īsā – Jesus, peace be upon him, became a Prophet at the age of thirty. So Muhammad ﷺ and Mūsā were given Prophethood at the same age, while 'Īsā ﷺ was given Prophethood at a younger age.

Number Thirteen: Christians claim that Jesus was resurrected after his death; neither Muslims nor Christians claim that Mūsā or Muhammad ﷺ was resurrected, therefore Muhammad ﷺ is like Moses but Jesus is unlike Moses.

And we could go on with some further points. I think the point is made that the person who most resembled Moses ﷺ is Muhammad ﷺ, no one came after Mūsā ﷺ who resembled him like Muhammad ﷺ, by all standards.

Who the Prophecy of Deuteronomy Talks About

Now, we have talked about the similarity between this Prophet and Moses – **Like unto thee –** so let us look at other aspects of the Prophecy. Now, since we have determined that this Prophecy does not apply to ʻĪsā Ibn Maryam, so who does it apply to then? Could it be someone else from among the Jews? Since Mūsā is giving a prophecy and is speaking to the Jews, could it be someone other than Jesus? Well, he cannot be a Jew; the person whom this Prophecy talks about cannot be a Jew, because it says in Deuteronomy, 34:10: **And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses.** So this statement makes it clear that there would be no one among Banī Isrāʾīl – the Children of Israel, who is similar to Moses. Again: **And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses.** So none of the Prophets of Banī Isrāʾīl are comparable to Moses. So who is it then? Well the answer is right there in the Prophecy, it says: **Prophet from among their brethren,** so in the Prophecy it also excludes the Jews, it says from among their brethren, the brethren of the Jews. So here we have a Prophet from among the brethren of the Jews, and who are the brethrens of the Jews? Actually there is only one nation that fulfils this description, and that is the Arabs. Why? Because Ibrāhīm ﷺ had two sons and two sons only; Ishāq and Ismāʻīl. Ishāq is the father of the Jews, [and] Ismāʻīl ﷺ is the father of the Arabs. Ishāq had Ya'qūb, and Ya'qūb is the father of the twelve tribes. So the Jews trace their ancestry to Ishāq, while the Arabs trace their ancestry to Ismāʻīl. So this verse is very clear, it says that here you have a Prophet like Moses, and we saw the similarities between Muhammad ﷺ and Moses, and he is not a Jew but he is from among the brethren of the Jews, who are the Arabs.

And then the Prophecy goes on to say: **And will put My words in his mouth.** So God is saying that I will put My words in his mouth, in other words, this

Prophet will not be speaking of his own, but he will be speaking the words which are put in his mouth. And again, this fits exactly on the situation of Muhammad ﷺ; Allāh ﷻ says: **Nor does he speak from [his own] inclination**.[30] Muhammad is not speaking from his own, he is not speaking from his own desire, he is speaking the words that are put in his mouth by Allāh ﷻ. So Jibrīl is putting the words of Allāh in the mouth of Muhammad ﷺ. And you have in the Qurān many verses [in which] Allāh ﷻ is speaking; **I am your Lord**[31], **I am Allāh. There is no deity except Me**[32]**,** and other verses. And the Qurān – all of Qurān – is the words of Allāh ﷻ put in the mouth of Muhammad ﷺ. Now, the Bible is different; Christians claim that the Bible was inspired by God, but the words are the words of men, and they admit that the Bible has many authors, *many* different authors, and the books of the Bible are named after these authors. So you have John, you have Matthew, you have Luke; so these are the names of the authors of these books. Dr W Graham Scroggie of the Moody Bible Institute says in his book, *It is Human, Yet Divine,*

> "Yes, the Bible is human, although some out of zeal which is not according to knowledge, have denied this. Those books have passed through the minds of men, are written in the language of men, were penned by the hands of men and bear in their style the characteristics of men."

Qurān is different; Qurān is by Allāh, and Muhammad ﷺ was only the one who was speaking it, but it is the words of Allāh ﷻ put in his mouth.

The final part of the Prophecy states: **And he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him,** meaning he will not withhold any information; everything that he is given, he will speak it. And Allāh ﷻ says in Qurān: **O Messenger, announce that which has been revealed to you from your Lord, and if you do not, then you have not conveyed His Message. And Allāh will protect you from the people. Indeed, Allāh does not guide the disbelieving people.**[33] Allāh ﷻ is telling Muhammad ﷺ [that] O Messenger, convey everything that you have received, and if you do not do so, then you have not conveyed the Message, meaning if you only withhold one word that was given to you, you have not fulfilled your role, you have not fulfilled your responsibility. So everything that Muhammad ﷺ received, he delivered it, even when it was verses of Qurān criticising an action of his, like for example in Sūrah 'Abasa, when Rasūlullāh ﷺ was speaking to the noble man from Quraish and he ignored the

blind man ‘Abdullāh Ibn Umm Maktūm, Allāh ﷻ said: **The Prophet frowned and turned away. Because there came to him the blind man, [interrupting].** [34] [These were] words that were criticising that action of Muhammad ﷺ, and similar can be said about verses of Sūrah At-Tahrīm: **O Prophet, why do you prohibit [yourself from] what Allāh has made lawful for you, seeking the approval of your wives? And Allāh is Forgiving and Merciful.**[35] And one can go on in other examples. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ conveyed everything that was given to him. So that is one prophecy.

Prophecy of Muhammad ﷺ in the Book of Isiah

We have another Prophecy in Isiah 29, verses 11-18. I am not going to read the whole thing, I am going to read part of it, and you determine what this is talking about; it is quite obvious, straight-forward, it does not need any interpretation or explanation. It says: **And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, ‘Read this, I pray thee’ and he says, ‘I am not learned.’** Quite obvious. The book is delivered to a man who is unlettered, illiterate, and he is told, ‘Read,’ and he responds back by saying, ‘I cannot read.’ These are the exact words that were given by Jibrīl ﷺ to Muhammad ﷺ in his first encounter with *Wahī* – Revelation. And we are going to notice here that the Bible is talking about the major events; pretty much all of the major events that happened in the life of Muhammad ﷺ are in the Bible. You have the first Revelation, you have Hijrah, you have Ghazwat Badr, it talks about Fath Makkah; these are the major events in the life of Muhammad ﷺ and they are all in the Bible. Now, again, the verse is: **And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, ‘Read this, I pray thee’ and he says, ‘I am not learned.’** Now, the first verses revealed in Qurān were: **Recite in the name of your Lord who created. Created man from a clinging substance. Recite, and your Lord is the most Generous - Who taught by the pen - Taught man that which he knew not.**[36] What is even more interesting [is that] if we go back to the original [verse in Isiah] which is in Hebrew, the word ‘Read’ is *Qara'*, so if one would go back to the original Hebrew, it is the exact same word as Arabic – Qara', and it is spells it in English in this book as Qara, and it is pronounced Ka-raw. The author of the book says, “Is it not an amazing coincidence that the Hebrew text used not only a word with the same meaning but the exact same word itself?”

The Prophecy continues and it states that before the time of this man who will receive the Book, Muhammad ﷺ, it says the people would be forsaking the Words of God for 'the precept of men.' So it states that before the time of Muhammad ﷺ, people would neglect the Law of Allāh and they would follow the law of man, and that is exactly what happened; Jesus peace be upon him came to fulfil the Law of Moses, and then you have Saint Paul coming in and telling them otherwise. So Jesus was circumcised; Paul says no, you do not have to circumcise. Jesus said, 'I came to fulfil the Law letter by letter, jot by jot, word by word,' Paul said no, you do not have to fulfil the Law. So they left the Law of God and they followed the law of man, which is a fulfilment of this Prophecy. I could recite the whole Prophecy, it says: **And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, –** so there is a sealed Book **– which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed.**[37] So Qurān was sealed, and even the learned men did not have access to it before Muhammad ﷺ because it was destined to go to the man who was unlearned. **And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned. Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men.**[38] So now the people are following the words of men.

Prophecy of Hijrah of Muhammad ﷺ in the Book of Habakkuk

The Hjirah is prophesised in Habakkuk 3, verse 3, it says: **God (His guidance) came from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the Earth was full of his praise.** So it says His glory covered the heavens and the earth was full of His praise. It mentions two locations; Temān and Parān. Temān, according to J Hasting's *Dictionary of the Bible*, is an oasis just north of Madīnah, so Temān stands for Madīnah; Taymā' [or] Temān would stand for Madīnah, it is a locality just north of Madīnah. Where is Parān? Parān or Farān are Makkah; these are names for Makkah, and that is according to the Bible because the Bible states that Hājar and Ismā'īl were left in Parān, and obviously we know where Hājar and Ismā'īl were left, they were left in Makkah. So the name Farān or Parān or Bakkah are all different names of Makkah.

So you have God coming from Temān, which is Madīnah, and you have the Holy One from Mount Parān, [which is Makkah]. Where did Islām spread from? Islām spread from Madīnah, it did not spread from Makkah. When Rasūlullāh ﷺ was making Da'wah in Makkah, Islām was contained, the Message was not spreading, the number of people who adopted it were very few, and Rasūlullāh ﷺ left Makkah because of the restrictions placed on him, because he was not allowed to preach the Message. So the religion of Islām spread from Madīnah; that is when Islām went all over the world. So **God came from Teman**, meaning the guidance of Allāh came from Madīnah, but then the verse goes on to say: **the Holy One came from [Mount] Parān**. So the Holy One, who is Muhammad ﷺ, came from Makkah. And then it states: **His glory covered the heavens and the Earth was full of His praise**, and Muhammad ﷺ, his name means praise, and the Earth today is full of his praise, and this cannot fit anyone more than Muhammad ﷺ because there is not a single person in history who is praised more than Muhammad ﷺ. So this Prophecy fits the Hijrah [of Muhammad ﷺ] exactly; Muhammad ﷺ making Hijrah from Makkah to Madīnah, his religion spreading from Madīnah, and the world is full of the praise of Muhammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him.

Prophecy Test which Muhammad ﷺ Passed in the Book of Deuteronomy

In Deuteronomy 18: 21-22, [it is mentioned]: **And if thou say in thine heart, how shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken?** So here the Bible is telling us the acid test to know whether a man is speaking on behalf of God or not; how can we distinguish a liar from someone who is telling the truth. It goes on to say: **When a Prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the Prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.** If a Prophet says something and claims that this is coming from Allāh and it does not come to happen, then those words are not spoken by the Prophet, therefore everything a Prophet says will come to happen. Qurān, which is the Words of Allāh given to Muhammad ﷺ, is proving to us every day new miracles, [including] scientific miracles showing the truth of Al-Qurān. Now, there might have been scientific verses in other books that preceded

Qurān that came to happen, but you would also find in those books mistakes because they are written by men. With Qurān, everything that it mentioned was proven to be true and there are no contradictions in it and nothing in Qurān was [ever] proved to be false. So not only did Qurān prophesize about things that will happen in the future, but Qurān does not contain any errors in it. Because for example, out of pure coincidence and probability, a man two thousand years ago can go ahead and write predictions about the future; one could occur to be true and then ten false, so we cannot go and say, 'Well, this man is receiving this information from God because it has one single thing that was mentioned in it talking about the future,' for it to be from God then everything in the Qurān needs to be true, and that holds true to no book other than Al-Qurān. There is nothing in the Qurān that has been disproved and that will never happen. Allāh ﷻ has challenged the people in Qurān to produce anything similar to it, and the challenge is still open, and nobody has been able to face the challenge of Allāh in Qurān. The challenge started by producing a book similar to it, and then it was reduced to ten chapters, and then finally one chapter. Now the challenge is to produce one chapter similar to Qurān.

Prophecy of Muhammad ﷺ in the Book of Isiah

[It is mentioned] in Isiah 21:7: **And he saw a chariot with a couple of horsemen, a chariot of asses, and a chariot of camels.** Christians would say that the chariot of asses is 'Īsā ﷺ because he was the one who would ride a donkey. Who was the Prophet who would ride a camel? Is there any other Prophet who was known to ride a camel other than Muhammad ﷺ? So this is a Prophecy that is speaking about Jesus ﷺ and Muhammad ﷺ.

Now, it continues to say in 21:9: **And, behold, here cometh a chariot of men, with a couple of horsemen. And he answered and said, Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground.** Where is Babylon? [It is] in present day 'Irāq; Babylon is in 'Irāq. The Prophecy is saying that this army will destroy all of the false gods of Babylon and will erase all of the images therein. Which army is that? Whose army is it that would go into 'Irāq and eliminate all of the idol worshipping and erase all of the images of idolatry that existed in 'Irāq? The only army that would fit this description is the army that was sent by 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb to 'Irāq, and they

had succeeded in opening ʻIrāq and eliminating all of the false gods that existed therein. So this is another Prophecy that has been fulfilled.

Prophecy of Hijrah of Muhammad ﷺ in the Book of Isiah

Hijrah. In Isiah 21, verses 14 and 15, another reference to Hijrah: **The inhabitants of the land of Tema brought water to him that was thirsty, they prevented with their bread him that fled. For they fled from the swords, from the drawn sword, and from the bent bow, and from the grievousness of war.** So Muhammad ﷺ made Hijrah and the Ansār supported him with their bread, so this is also talking about Hijrah and Al-Ansār.

Prophecy of the Battle of Badr in the Book of Isiah

In Isiah 21, verses 16-17: **For thus hath the Lord said unto me, within a year, according to the years of a hireling, and all the glory of Kedar shall fail. And the residue of the number of archers, the mighty men of the children of Kedar, –** it is actually Qīdār **– shall be diminished: for the Lord, God of Israel, hath spoken it.** Who is Qīdār, or in English, Kedar? Who is that referring to? K-E-D-A-R. Well let us let the Bible speak for itself. It states in Genesis 25:13: **And these are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth; and Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam.** So Kedar is one of the sons of Ismāʻīl. In the Bible when it talks about the princes of Kedar, it is referring to the Arabs; Qīdār, in Arabic it is Qīdār, and the people of Quraish are descendants of Qīdār.

Let us go back to the Prophecy again: **For thus hath the Lord said unto me, within a year, according to the years of a hireling, and all the glory of Kedar shall fail. And the residue of the number of archers, the mighty men of the children of Kedar, shall be diminished: for the Lord, God of Israel, hath spoken it.** What is this referring to? We just spoke about Hijrah, right? In verses 14-15 we spoke about Hijrah and how the Ansār helped Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Now we are in verses 16 and 17; what is the event that happened one year after Hijrah? And notice here that it says: **And all the glory of Kedar shall fail**, [meaning] Quraish, and: **And the residue of the number of archers, the mighty men of the children of Kedar, shall be diminished**, – they will be

killed. What is this referring to? The Battle of Badr, and the Battle of Badr occurred in the second year of Hijrah, one year after the Hijrah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, so this is referring to the Battle of Badr. And it says that the mighty men of the children of Kedar shall be diminished; in the Battle of Badr, one of the most decisive battles in the history of Islām, all of the leaders of Quraish were killed, the leaders of Quraish who were the most brutal in their war against Islām were eliminated; Abū Jahl, Umayyah Bin Khalaf, 'Uqbah Bin Abī Mua'ith, and down the list one could go naming all of the names of the Non-Believers of Quraish who died during the Battle of Badr.

Prophecy of Muhammad ﷺ being a Descendant of Ismā'īl ﷺ in the Book of Isiah

In Isiah 11, verses 1 and 2: **And there shall come forth a Rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.**

Who is Jesse? According to *Encyclopedia Biblica:*

> "Jesse for Ishmael," – so Jesse is a contraction of Ishmael, and then it goes on to say – "The changes which proper names undergo in the mouths of small children account for a large number of these particular abbreviations - who could guess, to take modern examples, that Bob and Dick arose out of Robert and Richard?…such forms as in ai were particularly common in later times…and many more in the Talmud, which also exhibits various other kinds of abbreviation."

So here you have Bob standing for Robert, [you] wonder how small children would make that drastic change, but anyway, Jesse stands for Ishmael, Ismā'īl. So now that we know that Jesse is Ismā'īl, let us revisit the verse: **And there shall come forth a Rod out of the stem of Jesse, –** meaning the descendants of Ismā'īl **– and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the**

Lord.' Now, this Prophecy cannot fit on anyone except Muhammad ﷺ because he was the most prominent descendant of Ismā'īl ﷺ.

Mūsā ﷺ Prophesising the Coming of Muhammad ﷺ in the Book of Deuteronomy

Deuteronomy 33: 1-2: **And this is the blessing, wherewith Moses the man of God blessed the Children of Israel before his death. And he said, The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir to them; he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them.**

So now Mūsā is speaking to the Children of Israel before his death, he is giving them a prophecy, he is saying: **The Lord came from Sinai, –** Sīnā' **– and rose up from Seir to them; he shined forth from mount Paran.** Sīnā' is where the Message of Mūsā came from, so this is referring to himself; Sīnā'. Sā'eer in Arabic or S-E-I-R in English; Seir stands for the Message of 'Īsā, because that is a series of mountains in Falastīn close to where 'Īsā, Jesus peace be upon him, lived, so this is referring to 'Īsā ﷺ. Mount Parān again is Makkah, so it is talking about Muhammad ﷺ. And this is similar to what was mentioned in Sūrah At-Tīn; *Wat-Tīni Waz-Zaytūn, Wa Tūri Sīnīn*.

[1] By the fig and the olive | *Wat-Tīni Waz-Zaytūn*. *At-Tīn* is figs, and figs is associated with Falastīn; they grow a lot of figs. And then you have *Zaytūn* – olives. So these are referring to Mūsā and 'Īsā.
[2] And [by] Mount Sinai |*Wa Tūri Sīnīn* is referring to the same thing; the Message of 'Īsā ﷺ and Mūsā ﷺ.
[3] And [by] this secure city [Makkah][39] | *Wa Hādhal Baladil Amīn*; Makkah.

So it is a pretty similar thing in Sūrah At-Tīn, but with this Prophecy here, Mūsā ﷺ is talking about his Message, how that is the beginning of a Da'wah, and then [how] 'Īsā ﷺ will carry it further, but then it will rise from Parān, meaning the fulfilment of the Message will come from Makkah.

It goes on to say: **And He came with ten thousands of saints.** Who are the ten thousand saints? As-Sahābah ﷺ when they opened Makkah, Mount Paran. Fath

Makkah was done by ten thousand; Rasūlullāh ﷺ had ten thousand men with him when they opened Makkah. And: **From His right hand Came a fiery law for them**, and the right hand stands for truth, justice, and strength.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ Referred to as the 'Comforter' in Gospel of John

The Paraclete also stands for Muhammad ﷺ; there are a few verses in which this was mentioned, it is also sometimes translated as the 'Comforter'. In John 16, verses 7-14, it states: **Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.**

I am not going to go into explaining all of this, but I think the meaning is clear that this is referring to Muhammad ﷺ.

So these are some of the prophecies mentioned about Muhammad ﷺ in the Bible and some other events that happened during his mission. We are done with the pre-Prophethood era, and now Inshā'Allāhu Ta'ālā we can start with the Prophethood.

8

The Revelation

Muhammad's ﷺ First Encounter with Revelation

Jibrīl ﷺ Visits Muhammad ﷺ

Rasūlullāh ﷺ used to spend long periods of time in *Ghār Hirā'* – the Cave of Hirā'. One day he was visited by the angel Jibrīl ﷺ. Jibrīl ﷺ came to Muhammad ﷺ in his original form, so Muhammad ﷺ saw Jibrīl in his angelic form and not in the form of a man, which he would sometimes see him in. In the Hadīth of Jibrīl, the well-known Hadīth of Jibrīl narrated by 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb, [he says that] Jibrīl ﷺ came in the form of a man, 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb says, "A man with very dark hair and very bright white clothes and we do not see any traces of travel on him." So he came in the form of a man, but

in this particular situation, Jibrīl ﷺ appeared in his original form, and that happened only twice.

First Verses Revealed to Muhammad ﷺ

Jibrīl ﷺ came to Muhammad ﷺ and told him, "***Iqra' –* Recite.**" Now, the word Iqra' has two meanings; one of them is 'Read' and the other is 'Recite'. In this situation of Muhammad ﷺ it means 'Recite'. Jibrīl ﷺ told Muhammad ﷺ, "Iqra'." Muhammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, responded and said, "*Mā Ana Bi-Qāri'* – I cannot read." Jibrīl ﷺ grabbed Muhammad ﷺ and squeezed him; crushed him, and then he released Muhammad ﷺ and told him, "Iqra' – Recite." Muhammad ﷺ responded again and said, "*Mā Ana Bi-Qāri'* – I cannot read". So Jibrīl ﷺ held him a second time, and pressed him hard and then released him again and told him, "Iqra'." And this happened three times until Jibrīl ﷺ eventually recited the first verses of Qurān: **Recite in the name of your Lord who created - Created man from a clinging substance. Recite, and your Lord is the most Generous - Who taught by the pen - Taught man that which he knew not.**[40] This was the first encounter between Rasūlullāh ﷺ and the angel Jibrīl. The Messenger of Allāh Muhammad ﷺ was terrified by that incident. He went back home and he entered and he immediately went to his wife Khadījah ﵂ and said, "*Zammilūnī Zammilūnī! Daththirūnī Daththirūnī!* – Wrap me in a garment! Wrap me in a garment!" Rasūlullāh ﷺ was shivering, he was feeling cold, and he was asking his wife to wrap him up. Rasūlullāh ﷺ was terrified and afraid because of this incident that happened to him, plus Rasūlullāh ﷺ had a dislike to anything that had to do with Jinn and spirits and sorcery, and he was afraid that what happened to him might be similar to what is happening to sorcerers. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ explained the incident to his wife Khadījah ﵂; Khadījah, she responded and said, "No! Allāh ﷻ will never forsake you because of your righteousness! You support the needy, you help the poor, you are generous towards the guests." So because of the prior conduct of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, Khadījah ﵂ knew that such a person cannot be forsaken by God. [She was saying], "Allāh ﷻ will protect you, do not worry. What happened to you cannot be from Satan."

Rasūlullāh ﷺ and Khadījah رضي الله عنها Visit Waraqah Bin Naufal

And then Khadījah رضي الله عنها offered to take Muhammad ﷺ to her uncle, or in some narrations it is her cousin, Waraqah Bin Naufal. So he went to Waraqah Bin Naufal and we mentioned that Waraqah Bin Naufal was a man who became Christian, and he was lettered, and he had scrolls from the Bible which he would study. Khadījah took Muhammad ﷺ to Waraqah and Waraqah asked Muhammad ﷺ to explain exactly what happened. Waraqah Bin Naufal responded and said, "This is *An-Nāmūs Al-Akbar…*" – An-Nāmūs Al-Akbar is the greatest angel; Jibrīl – "…who descended on Mūsā." Waraqah Bin Naufal immediately knew that this is the angel Jibrīl and he is revealing to Muhammad ﷺ a revelation similar to that which was given to Mūsā عليه السلام. And you can see, Subhān'Allāh, that Waraqah Bin Naufal here made a correlation between Muhammad ﷺ and Mūsā, [this relates] back to what we were saying; he said that this is similar to what was given to Mūsā عليه السلام. And then Waraqah Bin Naufal said something interesting, he said, "And I wish that I was young when your people will drive you out of your land." This was a surprise to Rasūlullāh ﷺ, so Rasūlullāh questioned Waraqah and said, "*Awa Mukhrijiyyahum?* – They will drive me out of my land?" [He was thinking] how could that happen? And Rasūlullāh ﷺ had every right to question what Waraqah was saying because Muhammad ﷺ was the most beloved man, he was the most admired man in Makkah; how could they drive me out? Muhammad ﷺ belonged to the noblest family in Makkah – Banū Hāshim. Muhammad ﷺ was someone who had no quarrels with the people for them to drive him out of his land. Plus, they were living in the environment and the culture in which it was unacceptable to drive someone out of their homeland. In tribal society, the only way they could survive in the harsh environment of the desert is for them to hold together, so you had extreme loyalty to the tribe; every member of a tribe considered that their total loyalty goes to the tribe, and [they expected] the same thing, [that] the tribe is loyal to the member of the tribe, anything else would mean death in that harsh environment. So they used to stick together and their family relationships were very strong. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ was asking Waraqah Bin Naufal, "Would they drive me out of my land?" Waraqah Bin Naufal said, "Anyone who has presented to his people with something similar to this would be driven out of their land; they would take him as an enemy." Waraqah Bin Naufal was a wise man who studied history and he knew the nature of the conflict between truth

and falsehood. He knew that even though Muhammad ﷺ was admired by his people, even though he belonged to the most noble family, even though he had no conflicts with the members of his community, but because he is calling them to Islām, this is what will happen to him, he will go through these trials and tribulations, and what Waraqah Bin Naufal said came to fruition, it happened exactly as he stated. And the words of Waraqah Bin Naufal were an early warning for Muhammad ﷺ to tell him what was coming ahead; that it is going to be difficult and it will not be easy for you.

Iqra' – We are an Ummah of Knowledge

What Iqra' Means for Us

We talked about the beginning of Revelation – *Al-Wahī*, and the first words that were given to Rasūlullāh ﷺ were Iqra' – Recite. What does that mean for us, Iqra'? These words, Iqra', what they mean to us the Muslims is that we are an Ummah that reads, an Ummah that studies, an Ummah that learns. These words had a powerful effect on an illiterate nation and it made them the scholars of the world. When Qurān was revealed, the followers of Rasūlullāh ﷺ were mostly illiterate, but these words inspired them to learn. And within a very short time, the Muslim Ummah was the most educated, the most scholarly nation on the face of the Earth. And the number of scholars that this Ummah has produced is unsurpassed. And when you look at the qualities of the scholars of this Ummah, you see their uniqueness, and the fact that they do not have any resemblance [to the scholars] in any other nation. Take for example the memory of Al-Bukhārī; his ability to memorise over a quarter of a million Hadīth, or Ash-Shāfi'ī, who said "When I open a book I have to cover one page, because I would memorise everything and I do not want the information on the two pages to mix." – Photographic memory. Or the scholar Al-Wafā' Bin 'Aqīl, who wrote an encyclopedia of three hundred volumes. Unfortunately it did not survive; the original copies of it were in the library of Baghdād which was sacked by the Tatār, I think only a volume or two survived. It was the power of these words, Iqra', that made this sudden change in the Ummah.

What Iqra' Means for Rasūlullāh ﷺ

Now, with Rasūlullāh ﷺ the situation is different; with Rasūlullāh ﷺ he did not learn how to read and write, [so] with Rasūlullāh ﷺ the word meant 'Recite'. For us it means that we have to learn how to read and write, but for Rasūlullāh ﷺ it has a different meaning, it has the meaning of reciting and repeating what Allāh ﷻ has revealed to him. Why? Because with Rasūlullāh ﷺ, Allāh wanted him to be illiterate, it was part of the decree of Allāh ﷻ. Allāh ﷻ says: **And you did not recite before it any scripture, nor did you inscribe one with your right hand. Otherwise the falsifiers would have had [cause for] doubt.**[41] So Allāh ﷻ says that Muhammad ﷺ, first of all, did not learn any scripture before Qurān, and he had not learnt the ability to read and write, so he was illiterate. Now, why would Rasūlullāh ﷺ, after Islām, have to learn to read and write? What purpose would that serve him, what good would that do for him, when he is receiving the knowledge fresh from Allāh ﷻ through Jibrīl? What purpose would it be for Rasūlullāh ﷺ to learn how to read and write? For us, reading is our key to knowledge, that is how we can learn knowledge, but for Rasūlullāh ﷺ, he was being taught by Jibrīl ﷺ, and there is nothing that books would do for Rasūlullāh ﷺ, there is no knowledge that the books can offer Rasūlullāh ﷺ when he is receiving the knowledge directly from Allāh. So Iqra' has a different meaning for Muhammad ﷺ, it means 'Recite' in his case, but for us it means 'Read,' and this is how the early Muslims understood the first word that was revealed in Qurān.

The Importance Islām Gives to Knowledge

And notice in the fourth Āyah [Allāh says]: **[The One] Who taught by the pen**, so that is an indication for us that it is Allāh who taught by the pen and it is a bounty and blessing from Him. And Allāh ﷻ makes an oath in Sūrah Al-Qalam: **Nūn. By the pen and what they inscribe.** And when Allāh ﷻ makes an oath in something it is to give it importance, so Allāh ﷻ made an oath in the name of the pen. And it is mentioned that in the Battle of Badr, the Non-Believers who were prisoners of war were offered freedom if they could teach ten Muslims how to read and write, so that is the importance that Islām gave to knowledge. We are an Ummah of knowledge, we are an Ummah of scholarship, and unfortunately today we are lagging behind in our duties. This is an Ummah

that should be at the top in fields of scholarship, and dear brothers and sisters, if we have lost the interest in learning, at least let us fix the problem with the next generation. If you happen to be a person who is having difficulty encouraging yourself to learn and to study, do your best, but at least make sure that this problem does not become an inherited problem from you to your children. We want to make sure that the next generation is a generation that will love reading, that will love knowledge, that will love to study and learn.

There was a study done on children who love to read and children who do not have the same interest, they tried to find [out] what was the difference in their upbringing, how come some children love reading and some do not. They found some common characteristics among the children who love to read:

Their Parents are People who Love Reading

Number One: They found out that their parents are people who love reading, so the child would grow up always seeing one of their parents or both holding a book. And in the early years of our development, it is a process of imitation, so when the child grows up in their young age, seeing one or two of their parents always holding a book and reading, they associate reading with something good. Because they always try to be like their parents, so they grow up loving to play with magazines and books; you would find that the child is not even able to read yet, nevertheless they are flipping pages of a magazine, and since they are unable to read they would usually look for photos or pictures. But they are doing it because they see their parents do it, so the more they see their parents reading or flipping through pages, the more they would love to imitate them. So in your house, in front of your children, read; give them this good example.

They Grow Up in a Print-Rich Environment

Second Quality: They grow up in a print-rich environment, they grow up in houses that have books, that have a library. They have a lot of books around them, so they are surrounded with books in their young age. So they have access to books.

They have their Own Library

Number Three: They own libraries. It is something good to encourage your child to own a library and to build their own library, because as a human being, we have this love of ownership, and especially with kids you can see it; 'This is mine' – that is the word that you will always hear; 'It belongs to me, it is mine.' So have them feel that they own a book, [that] they have their own library; it has some special meaning to them.

Their Parents would take them out to Bookstores and Libraries

[Number Four:] Their parents would take them out to bookstores, to libraries. When the parents want to entertain their children once in a while, they would take them to a public library or they would take them to a bookstore. So all of this is part of encouraging them to read.

These are Children who watch Little or No TV

And finally Number Five: These are children who watch little or no TV. TV is one of the greatest distractions from learning. If you give a child the choice between TV and a book, they will choose TV. So restricting their TV viewing would encourage them to read. So again, these are kids who either do not watch TV at all or their viewing time is controlled.

So these are some steps that we as parents can take to ensure that our children will grow up loving to read.

Differentiating Between Knowledge that Benefits and Knowledge that Does Not

Now, even though I have been talking about reading and encouraging reading and that we should read a lot, but I need to qualify that statement; this does not mean that we read anything. At particular stages, there are some things that could be dangerous to a development of a person. In the early years of Madīnah, Rasūlullāh ﷺ saw with 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb some scrolls of At-Torāh. Rasūlullāh ﷺ became very angry and his face was red, and he criticised 'Umar Ibn-Al-Khattāb for reading from the Torāh. But that was not a permanent ban, it was only in the early years until the Muslims developed solid foundation, and then later on that order was abrogated and Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "I have prohibited

you from reading the stories of Banī Isrā'īl – Children of Israel," meaning their scripture, "but now I am allowing you to read it, however, do not believe it and do not disbelieve in it." In other words, you are going to be faced with statements that have no reference in Qurān, so do not take it as the truth but at the same time do not reject it, because it possibly could be true or it possibly could be some later insertion. So we can see that Rasūlullāh ﷺ did not want them to be exposed to material at the early stage of development that could be detrimental for their education process. And in any curriculum, in any institution, it is a development process, so you need to feed the student what the student is capable of absorbing. And Ibn Mas'ūd ﷺ says, "If you speak to the people things that their minds are unable to comprehend, it might be a Fitnah for some of them," it might turn them away. Therefore one needs to be careful what material they are reading and what material their children are reading. So I am not saying read anything; comics and other nonsense books that exist out there, or people just wasting their time. You would find that people are always holding books in trains and on planes; most of the time it is going to be a fiction book, a novel, it is just a way to pass their time, there is no real knowledge in it. And in Islām, we know that there is knowledge that benefits and knowledge that does not. Rasūlullāh ﷺ used to make the Du'ā': *Allāhumma Innī As'aluka 'Ilman Nāfi'an Wa A'ūzubika Min 'Ilman Lā Yanfa'* – O Allāh, I ask you to give me knowledge that benefits and I seek refuge in You from knowledge that does not [benefit]. So there is some good knowledge and there is some bad knowledge, and we know that for a fact, it is in Sūrah Al-Baqarah; the two angels who came down to teach the people magic – *Hārūta Wa Mārūt* – **But the two angels do not teach anyone unless they say, "We are a trial, so do not disbelieve [by practicing magic]." And [yet] they learn from them that by which they cause separation between a man and his wife. But they do not harm anyone through it except by permission of Allāh.**[42] That they are teaching people knowledge that is evil and they are telling the people that this is not good for you. So even though it is knowledge, but it is knowledge that does not benefit, it is knowledge of sorcery; magic.

So these are the first verses revealed to Muhammad ﷺ.

Different Forms of Revelation

Ibn Al-Qayyim talks about the different types of Revelation, and this is from his book *Zād Al-Ma'ād*. Ibn Al-Qayyim is a fascinating scholar, he was the most prominent of the students of Ibn Taymiyyah, and he was a prolific writer, he wrote so many books on so many different subjects. This particular book is called *Zād Al-Ma'ād*, and in this book he writes about the Sunnah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, so he writes about the Prophetic medicine, actually the book *The medicine of the Prophet* is one volume of *Zād Al-Ma'ād.* The book is everything surrounding Rasūlullāh ﷺ, everything that had to do with Rasūlullāh. So he would write about the different forms of transportation that Rasūlullāh ﷺ had, all of his weapons, his wives, his children, his family life, what would the Messenger of Allāh do when he was in Hajj, what he did in his Salāh, so it is everything about the life of Muhammad ﷺ. The amazing thing about this book is that Ibn Al-Qayyim says in the introduction to the book, "I wrote this book when I was travelling, not when I was residing in my house, therefore I did not have my references and books with me." So it is amazing how you could write about such a topic without having references and books with you, and write such a book when you are travelling, and it is pretty much the best book written on the subject.

In the book, Ibn Al-Qayyim talks about the stages or the different categories of Revelation, he says the first [category of Revelation] is the period of true vision, it was the starting point of the Revelation to the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him. For six months, before receiving the Revelation, Rasūlullāh ﷺ used to frequently see dreams; he would see a dream at night time and he would see the fulfilment of the dream during the day time, and this continued for six months; whatever he sees at night would happen the next day.

Form One: Dreams

Rasūlullāh ﷺ says about dreams, that the true dream is one out of forty-six parts of Prophethood. And this number is interesting, because for how long was Rasūlullāh ﷺ seeing dreams? Six months. And how long was the Prophethood of Rasūlullāh ﷺ? Twenty three years. What is the ratio of six months to twenty three years? 1:46 – according to the Hadīth. Dreams are something that the

Believer can see, it is not restricted to the Prophets, but the difference is [that] in the situation of the Prophets, a dream is a form of Revelation. With us, we have three categories of dreams which were stated by Rasūlullāh ﷺ:

True Dreams

Number one: A true dream, and this is a dream that will occur as it was seen, or it has a meaning that needs to be interpreted. This is the first dream.

Dreams from Shaitān

Second type of dreams is a dream from Shaitān. *Ru'yā Tahzīm Min Ash-Shaitān*; Rasūlullāh ﷺ says, "This is a dream from Shaitān and he wants to inflict harm on you." Rasūlullāh ﷺ says, "If you ever see such a dream, then seek refuge in Allāh from Shaitān and do not tell that dream to anyone." Why? Because that is what Shaitān wants to happen, he wants to see you miserable, going around complaining to people about that horrible dream that you have seen. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ is telling you to forget about it; do not tell anyone about it if it seems to be a bad dream.

Meaningless Dreams

Rasūlullāh ﷺ says about the third type of dream, "You think about something in the daytime and you dream about it at night." So it is something on your mind, something that you think about frequently; you see it at night. Rasūlullāh ﷺ says this is a meaningless dream, it does not have any meaning.

So these are the three different types of dreams that we could have. So one of them is true, one is false, and one is meaningless.

Form Two: Inspiration through Angel

The second type of Revelation: It is when the angel inspires to Rasūlullāh ﷺ, but he does not appear to Muhammad ﷺ, it is just a form of inspiration. An example of this is [when] Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "The Noble Spirit (Jibrīl) revealed to me, 'No soul will perish until it exhausts its due course, so fear Allāh and gently request Him, never get so impatient to the verge of disobedience of Allāh. What Allāh has can never be acquired but through obedience to Him.'" So this is not Jibrīl speaking to Muhammad ﷺ, it is an inspiration.

Form Three: Appearance of Angel

The third type [of Revelation] is the Angel appearing to Muhammad ﷺ in the physical form of a human being, and an example of that would be Hadīth Jibrīl; Jibrīl ﷺ came in the form of a man and he was seen by Rasūlullāh ﷺ and by the other Companions.

Form Four: Jibrīl Descending and Seizing Muhammad ﷺ

The fourth [type of Revelation]: The Angel came to him like the toll of a bell, and this was the most difficult form, because the Angel used to seize him ﷺ tightly and sweat would stream from his forehead even on the coldest day. This was the most difficult for him; Jibrīl ﷺ would descend on Muhammad ﷺ and the Messenger of Allāh would feel the weight, and he would hear the voice of a ringing bell, and that might be the vibration of the wings of the Angel, because there is another Hadīth that says that when Allāh ﷻ reveals His command, the angels have so much *Khushū'* that they start shaking their wings, and the sound of the movement of their wings is like dragging a chain over a rock bed. So it is like dragging steel over rocks, it has that violent ringing sound; that is the sound of the vibration of the wings of the angels.

When Jibrīl would come to Rasūlullāh ﷺ in this form, the weight of Rasūlullāh ﷺ would increase, and if he was on top of a camel, the camel would be forced to get down on its knees because of the extreme weight, and the back of the camel would bend. Once Rasūlullāh ﷺ had his knee over the thigh of Zayd Bin Hārithah and Jibrīl descended on Muhammad ﷺ, Zayd Ibn Hārithah said, "I felt the weight of the knee of Rasūlullāh ﷺ; it was almost going to crush my thigh." And again, what seems to be very heavy is because the Words of Qurān are heavy. Allāh ﷻ says: **Indeed, We will cast upon you a heavy word.**[43] The Words of Allāh are heavy, it is a heavy burden.

Form Five: Muhammad ﷺ Seeing Jibrīl in his Actual Form

Number five: The Prophet ﷺ would see Jibrīl in his actual form, and this occurred twice and is mentioned in Sūrah An-Najm: **And he certainly saw him in another descent. At the Lote Tree of the Utmost Boundary.**[44] He saw him another time, so Rasūlullāh ﷺ saw Jibrīl in his original form twice. And Jibrīl in

his original form had wings that would cover the horizon – huge! He would cover the horizon. In fact, Rasūlullāh ﷺ said that wherever he would look, he would see the wings of the angel Jibrīl in front of him, covering the horizon in every direction.

Form Six: Directly Conversing with Allāh ﷻ

Finally, the sixth [type of Revelation]: Allāh ﷻ would speak to Muhammad ﷺ directly without any intermediary, and this occurred in Al-Mi'rāj. Rasūlullāh ﷺ spoke directly to Allāh ﷻ and Allāh spoke directly to Muhammad ﷺ, and this form actually also occurred to Mūsā عليه السلام.

So these are the six different forms of Revelation.

The Four Greatest Women Who Ever Lived

Rasūlullāh ﷺ initially was instructed to keep the Message private; not to make it public, and to invite only his very close associates, so Rasūlullāh ﷺ made Da'wah to the ones who were very close to him. The first person to believe out of both men and women was Khadījah رضي الله عنها, she was the first Believer. Ibn Kathīr says, "Combining these accounts, we see that Khadījah was the first woman to accept Islām, the leader of the pack as it were. And also, she preceded the men." She was the first to believe in Muhammad ﷺ. Now, we talked about Khadījah رضي الله عنها and we talked earlier about the marriage of Rasūlullāh ﷺ to Khadījah رضي الله عنها. Now, what made Khadījah special? How come she was one of the greatest women who ever lived? Was it because of her career? Was it because of her knowledge? What was it exactly that made Khadījah among the four best women who ever lived? I think we should give this some consideration, and especially the sisters [who] should revisit the text regarding Khadījah رضي الله عنها and the other three women who we mentioned in the Hadīth; Maryam, Āsiyah and Fātimah. If we want to find something common between these four women, we would find the following:

They had Deep Faith in Allāh ﷻ that Reached the Level of Yaqīn

Number One: All of the four [women] had a solid spiritual heart, they had some strong spirituality. Their Īmān was powerful, their Īmān was solid; that is

something that is clearly seen in the case of the four, they had strong Īmān. And their faith in Allāh ﷻ reached to the level of *Yaqīn*. Yaqīn is a state of conviction where nothing can bring doubts into the heart, so the heart has absorbed Īmān to a level where it makes the heart unshakeable; that is Yaqīn. It is strong to the extent that one would have more faith in what they believed than what they would see or hear; that is Yaqīn. It is as if you see something in front of your eyes even though you do not see it; that is the level of Yaqīn. It is clear that all of these four [women] had that level of Īmān. Let us take for example Āsiyah, the wife of Fir'aun. Āsiyah had all what a worldly woman would want; a woman whose concern is this Dunyā would want wealth, would want a very comfortable living, would want to have a rich and powerful husband, would want to have servants, would want to have power; she had it all. Āsiyah was willing to give up all of this for the sake of Allāh ﷻ. Allāh ﷻ had put her in a palace that was the best in the world; she said, 'O Allāh, I want a house in Jannah!' **And Allāh presents an example of those who believed: the wife of Pharaoh, when she said, "My Lord, build for me near You a house in Paradise and save me from Pharaoh and his deeds and save me from the wrongdoing people."**[45] 'O Allāh, I do not want this, I want something in Jannah.' Allāh ﷻ had given her the most powerful and wealthiest husband; she said I do not want this: A**nd save me from Pharaoh and his deeds.** I do not want to have anything to do with it. So that willingness to give up all of these worldly aspects for the sake of Allāh is a reflection of the depth of her faith. Now, keep in mind that Āsiyah was living in a very evil and corrupt environment, she was surrounded with evil from every direction, nevertheless she was able to overcome all of her surroundings and attach her heart to Allāh. That is another indication of the strength of Īmān, that you are able to fight the tide which is surrounding you from every direction and keep your connection to Allāh. And we could say the same about all of the rest. So number one; they had deep faith in Allāh ﷻ that reached the level of Yaqīn.

They were either Good Wives or Good Mothers

The second common thing that we find among them is that all of the four were either good wives or good mothers, and this is something that might not pass well with feminists or our sisters who are feminised or affected by that line of thought. These four women were not great because of their activism or their

career or their knowledge; you find something common between the four and that was they were either good wives or good mothers. Āsiyah and Maryam both raised up two of the greatest Ambiyā' of Allāh; ‘Īsā and Mūsā. Khadījah ﷺ was outstanding because of her support of her husband, it was not because she was a businesswoman, that did not factor in, it was because she was an excellent wife for Rasūlullāh ﷺ and she supported him when he needed her. Rasūlullāh ﷺ would always find Khadījah on his side. And Fātimah ﷺ was an exceptional wife too. To give an example, ‘Alï Ibn Abī Tālib heard that Rasūlullāh ﷺ had received some servants, so he and his wife decided that they should go to Rasūlullāh ﷺ and ask him to give them one servant because of the difficult work that Fātimah ﷺ was going through in her house. So they went to the house of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and Rasūlullāh ﷺ was not there, so they spoke to ‘Ā'ishah, and they told ‘Ā'ishah ﷺ, “We want to ask Rasūlullāh ﷺ to give us a servant because of the hardship that Fātimah ﷺ is going through.” She was suffering [because of] hard work [and] serving in her house. Rasūlullāh ﷺ was told [of this] by ‘Ā'ishah, so he went to the house of ‘Alï and Fātimah. ‘Alï Ibn Abī Tālib is narrating this Hadīth, he says, “Rasūlullāh ﷺ came in and we were already in our bed. As soon as we saw Rasūlullāh ﷺ we stood up. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, ‘Remain where you are.’” So they were lying in their beds. ‘Alï Ibn Abī Tālib said, “Rasūlullāh ﷺ came and he sat between me and Fātimah in our bed so he was touching both of us.” Now, Rasūlullāh ﷺ loved his daughter so much [that] he once said, “Fātimah is part of me; what hurts her hurts me, and what pleases her pleases me.” This was his only surviving child, and he loved her dearly, he loved her so much, so Rasūlullāh ﷺ would want to do for his daughter what was best for her, he would want his daughter to have the best life. Rasūlullāh ﷺ had the ability to give them a servant, but did he do that? Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, “I have something better for you than a servant. Before you go to bed, say Subhān'Allāh thirty three times, Alhamdulillāh thirty three times, and Allāhu Akbar thirty three times. That is better for you than a servant.” Now, Rasūlullāh ﷺ knew that his daughter – the daughter of the best, and she is of the best – Rasūlullāh ﷺ knew that she was serving in her household until her hands became harsh; the skin on her hand was thick, nevertheless Rasūlullāh ﷺ advised her to continue with what she was doing and he told her instead of getting a servant, I will give you this gift; Subhān'Allāh, Alhamdulillāh and Allāhu Akbar. Now, Alï Bin Abī Tālib, later on, he said, “Fātimah was working

so hard, she was using the stone mill until her hands became harsh and rough. She was drawing water out of the well until it left marks on her neck, she was cleaning the house until her clothes became dirty, and she was cooking until it affected her face." Now, this was the daughter of the greatest man that ever lived – Muhammad ﷺ, and she was his only daughter, and Rasūlullāh ﷺ knew what she was going through. And that is what made Fātimah رضي الله عنها among the four best women who ever lived. In terms of knowledge, ‘Ā'ishah is more knowledgeable than Fātimah and Khadījah, nevertheless, ‘Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها did not have the same level as Fātimah and Khadījah.

So sisters, think about your future and think about your priorities. This is not to say that we should not learn and we should not be Islāmically active, but we want to know where the greatest Ajr is. We are all encouraged to fulfil our roles and to be the best and to learn the most, but there are things that are more rewardable than others, so let us optimise our ‘Ibādah.

The First Ones to Believe

So Khadījah رضي الله عنها was the first to believe, and she stood besides Rasūlullāh ﷺ until she died. She was the first Believer. The first slave to become Muslim was Zayd Bin Hārithah, the first child to become Muslim was ‘Alï Ibn Abī Tālib, and the first free man to become Muslim was Abū Bakr As-Siddīq رضي الله عنه. Now, there is an old discussion between our scholars on who was the first man to become Muslim; some would say Abū Bakr, and some would say ‘Alï Ibn Abī Tālib. We know the first woman was Khadījah and she was first among everyone, but among men, who was the first, was it Abū Bakr or ‘Alï? And this is an old discussion between our scholars. Ibn Hajar Al-‘Asqalānī tries to resolve that dispute, he says that the first to accept Islām was Abū Bakr, because ‘Alï Ibn Abī Tālib was never a Non-Muslim to become a Muslim, ‘Alï Ibn Abī Tālib never was in his life a Non-Muslim for him to embrace Islām, because ‘Alï Ibn Abī Tālib became a Muslim at a very young age, and he never worshipped idols in his life and he never embraced the religion of the people of Makkah, and he was brought up in the household of Prophethood, therefore he was brought up on Islām from day one, because again, he was adopted by Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Therefore we would say that the first man to become Muslim was Abū Bakr As-Siddīq رضي الله عنه.

Abū Bakr's ﷺ Unparalleled Contribution to Islām

Now, let us continue with the quotation from Ibn Kathīr, he says,

> "Combining these accounts, we see that Khadījah was the first woman to accept Islām, the leader of the pack, as it were, and also she preceded the men. Among the slaves, the first to accept Islām was Zayd Bin Hārithah." – by the way, Zayd Bin Hārithah was also in the household of Rasūlullāh ﷺ – "And the first boy to accept Islām was 'Alï Ibn Abī Tālib, he was young then and had not reached the age of puberty as generally believed; these were the family of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. The first free man to accept Islām was Abū Bakr, the Trusting. His conversion was more beneficial than that of those mentioned before because he was highly a respected leader, an honoured chief of Quraish, and a man of wealth. He became a missionary for Islām and was very much liked and admired for spending his wealth in the service of Allāh and His Messenger."

So it is an interesting note from Ibn Kathīr that Abū Bakr was the most beneficial. Why? Because he was a wealthy, prominent member of the society who brought in all of his resources for the service of Islām. You see, when you say wealthy and respected member of the society, it would mean nothing if a person does not bring in what Allāh has endowed them with to serve Islām, but Abū Bakr ﷺ put everything on the line; all of his wealth, all of his business, his connections, his knowledge, he used it all for Islām, he put everything under the service of Rasūlullāh ﷺ; it is all yours. And that is why he was called Siddīq, because he was the first. Siddīq is the one who believes; people rejected Rasūlullāh ﷺ, Abū Bakr accepted him. There was a saying that everyone hesitated in accepting Islām except Abū Bakr; as soon as it was presented to him he accepted it. Everyone else thought about it, gave it a second thought, but with Abū Bakr, it was an immediate response. And he would never have second thoughts about serving Islām; he was the one who came with all of his wealth, he was the one who first believed in Rasūlullāh ﷺ in Makkah, he was the one who first believed in *Al-Isrā' Wal-Mi'rāj*, he was the one who accompanied Rasūlullāh ﷺ in the difficult journey of Al-Hijrah – that was the status of Abū Bakr As-Siddīq ﷺ.

We talked earlier about the loyalty of Rasūlullāh ﷺ to the ones who stood with him in the early days. Here we have a Hadīth in Bukhārī; Abū Dardā' narrates that a feud happened between Abū Bakr and ʻUmar. Now, these were the two advisors of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, they were very close to him. ʻAlï Ibn Abī Tālib said, "I would see Rasūlullāh ﷺ enter with Abū Bakr and ʻUmar, he would leave with Abū Bakr and ʻUmar, he would sit with Abū Bakr and ʻUmar; wherever we would see Rasūlullāh ﷺ, we would see Abū Bakr on one side and ʻUmar on the other." These were his two advisors. But still Rasūlullāh ﷺ had this special loyalty to the ones who were with him from the early days. So [Abū Dardā' narrates that] this dispute happened between Abū Bakr and ʻUmar. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "Allāh sent me to you, and all of you said, 'You lie', except Abū Bakr who said, 'He spoke the truth,' and he dedicated himself and his fortune to me. Will you then leave this friend of mine to me?" He said that twice. He said, 'Leave my friend alone; do not harm him, leave him alone.'

Public Stage of Da'wah

Rasūlullāh ﷺ Gathers the People of Quraish

The early stage of Da'wah, the secret stage, was over with the revelation of the verse: **And warn, [O Muhammad], your closest kindred.**[46] This is in Sūrah Ash-Shuʻarā', it was revealed to Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Rasūlullāh ﷺ went out and stood on Mountain of As-Safā and he called out, "*Wā Subāhā!*" Wā Subāhā is like sounding the alarm, the sirens; you do not say Wā Subāhā unless there is an emergency going on, there is something very critical. So everyone who heard Rasūlullāh ﷺ ran towards the source of the voice, and the ones who could not go would send someone to report back to them. So Wā Subāhā is something that you do not say unless it is something very important. So all of the people gathered. Rasūlullāh ﷺ asked them, "If I tell you that there is an army behind this mountain that is about to attack you, would you believe me?" They said, "*Mā ʻAhidnā ʻAlaika Kadhibā* – We have never heard you lie." Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "*Fa-Innī Nadhīrul-Lakum Bayna Yadai ʻAdhābin Alīm* – I am here to warn you [of] a severe punishment." I came to warn you. "Allāh ﷻ sent me as a warner to you, and I am warning you a severe punishment that would befall you if you do not believe." These were the words Rasūlullāh ﷺ chose to deliver in his first public speech to the people of Quraish – I am here to warn you. So you

can see that it was very straight-forward, without much introduction, straight to the point; I am warning you a severe punishment. Rasūlullāh ﷺ did that because Allāh ﷻ tells the Ambiyā' that your duty is *Balāgh Mubīn*, your duty Is to convey the Message plainly. So when you convey the Message, it should not be confusing, it should not be obscure, it should not be sugar-coated, it should not be altered; it should be straight-forward, because you do not want to leave any doubts in the mind of the listener, you do not want to confuse them. Now, unfortunately many times when we make Da'wah, we confuse the listener, the listener comes out not knowing what is going on, what are we talking about, what are the consequences of belief and what are the consequences of disbelief. But Rasūlullāh ﷺ would leave no doubts in the mind of the listener, the listener would know that if they believe, they would be promised Jannah, and if they do not, they are risking Hellfire. They know that the consequences of disbelief would be Hellfire, and Rasūlullāh ﷺ would make his warnings very straight-forward.

Abū Lahab's Fury

Now, Rasūlullāh ﷺ called the people and the people assumed that this was something urgent and important and it was. Abū Lahab responded and said, "*Tabban Laka! A'li-Hādhā Jama'tanā?* – May evil befall you the rest of your day! Is this why you called us?!" Abū Lahab was upset, he was angry. Why? Because Rasūlullāh ﷺ called for an urgent gathering during the official business hours and he took me from my work and my business and I came here not to hear something serious, according to Abū Lahab; he is talking about afterlife, he is talking about religion, he is talking about spirituality, he is talking about things that are not tangible, he is wasting my time, I could have made money during those valuable minutes that I spent listening to him. So Abū Lahab was upset, Abū Lahab is thinking that this is the material world, if you do not have a deal to discuss, some business, some money to make, do not waste my time. And he said "*Tabbal Laka Sā'iral Yawm* – May evil befall the rest of the day," you wasted my time.

Our Desire for Dunyā over Ākhirah

Abū Lahab is not alone in that, he is speaking on behalf of a lot of people. People do not want to listen about religion, 'Do not waste my time talking about

this religion stuff. If you can promise me some money, if you can promise me something that will do me good in this world, [then fine], otherwise do not waste my time.' 'Excuse me sir, can I talk to you about religion for half an hour?' 'No I am busy, I cannot; I cannot afford half an hour.' And then what is that man in a rush to do? Maybe he is going to buy a refrigerator or a car or something, you know? And you are asking the person to give you half an hour of their time to talk about their salvation and they would refuse, nevertheless they are willing to spend hours and hours before buying a refrigerator or an oven; they would look at all of the deals, they would visit all of the department stores. Before a person would buy a used car, they would spend days and days of research, they would go and consult the Blue Book, so I would consult the Blue Book and I would go and read all of the classified ads. Days and days of my valuable life I am spending just to save a few hundred dollars, and I am not willing to give half an hour of my time to learn about what will save me in my eternal life.

Allāh Reveals Sūrah Cursing Abū Lahab and his Wife

So Abū Lahab was representing a lot of people when he said, "*Tabbal Laka Sā'iral Yawm*." Allāh ﷻ revealed the Sūrah: **May the hands of Abū Lahab be ruined, and ruined is he. His wealth will not avail him or that which he gained.**[47] [Allāh ﷻ says that] the hands of Abū Lahab will perish, and perish he. And then the Āyah says [that] his wealth will not do him any good. What was keeping Abū Lahab away from the truth? Business – his wealth. Allāh ﷻ is saying that his wealth will do him no good. The people who are rushing after Dunyā, Dunyā will do them no good if they do not have Islām in their heart.

Sūrah Al-Masad is a Miracle of Qurān

This Sūrah is a miracle of Qurān because it says that Abū Lahab and his wife are in Hellfire, and this Āyah was revealed while Abū Lahab and his wife were still alive. If Abū Lahab and his wife wanted to prove Qurān wrong, they could have said we are Muslims, but they remained Disbelievers until the day they died. So this is a miracle of Qurān, it is speaking about an event that had not happened yet, it is saying that Abū Lahab and his wife are in Hellfire while they are still alive, and they could have embraced Islām if they wanted to prove Qurān wrong, but they did not do it.

9

The Reaction

The first verses revealed to Rasūlullāh ﷺ were the first verses of Sūrah Al-'Alaq: **Recite in the name of your Lord who created. Created man from a clinging substance. Recite, and your Lord is the most Generous – Who taught by the pen – Taught man that which he knew not.**[48] These are the first Āyāt that were revealed. After that, the Revelation stopped for a while. And the whole initial encounter of Rasūlullāh ﷺ with Revelation, plus the waiting period that followed it, was [done] to make Rasūlullāh ﷺ love the Revelation and miss it, and it was to leave a permanent impression on him ﷺ, because we mentioned the manner in which the Revelation occurred; Rasūlullāh ﷺ was squeezed and the same command was repeated three times. And then Rasūlullāh ﷺ had to wait, and he was missing the Revelation so much. There is a narration in Bukhārī that [says] Rasūlullāh ﷺ

missed the Revelation so much that he would go to the top of a mountain and attempt suicide.

Iqra', Qum, Qum

First Āyāt of the First Three Surahs Revealed in Qurān are a Manual Book for the Dā'iyah

The first Āyāt that were revealed after Al-'Alaq were the Āyāt from Sūrah Al-Muzzammil and Sūrah Al-Muddaththir. Now, there is a difference of opinion on which was the first, but there is an agreement that these were the second and third set of Āyāt, even though we do not know which one of them was second or third. So you have the Āyāt of Sūrah Al-'Alaq, and then you have the Āyāt of Al-Muzzammil, and Al-Āyāt of Al-Muddaththir. One can say that these Āyāt form [a] manual book for the *Dā'iyah* – the one who is calling to Islām, and we can summarise it in: *Iqra', Qum, Qum,* and you can remember this; Iqra', Qum, Qum. These were the first Āyāt to train the early Muslims in Da'wah; Iqra', Qum, Qum.

Iqra' – 'Alaq.[49] ***Iqra' Bismi Rabbikalladhī Khalaq. Khalaqal Insāna Min***

Recite in the name of your Lord who created. Created man from a clinging substance.

Qum – ***Yā Ayyuhal Muzzammil. Qumil-Laila Illā Qalīlā.***[50]

O you who wraps himself [in clothing]. Arise [to pray] the night, except for a little.

Qum – ***Yā Ayyuhal Muddaththir. Qum Fa'andhir.***[51]

O you who covers himself [with a garment]. Arise and warn.

So you have *Iqra'*, which is a command to recite and learn. And then you have *Qumil-Laila Illā Qalīlā;* Pray at night, and then you have *Qum Fa'andhir;* Stand up and warn. So the first thing is that you learn, and this is something that you can apply in yourself, **t**he first thing is you learn, you study, you gain knowledge in Religion. And then the next step is you apply this in yourself and you start preaching it to others; *Qum Fa'andhir* – Warn. So what you learn, you have to teach. Ibn Al-Qayyim says that you do not attain complete Īmān until

you go through the stages of learning and teaching and propagating the Message of Allāh ﷻ. So you have the first stage [which] is *Iqra'* – learning, and then after that you start by teaching; *Qum Fa'andhir* – Stand up and warn. Now, learning and teaching needs something else to go along with it, and that is *'Ibādah* – forms of *Nawāfil* that you do like *Qiyām Al-Layl*. And Qiyām Al-Layl was mandatory on the early Muslims; Allāh ﷻ made it mandatory on the early Muslims for a few years and then that was abrogated. However, with the situation of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, he had to pray Qiyām Al-Layl; it was mandatory for him until he passed away. Until he died, Rasūlullāh ﷺ was praying Qiyām Al-Layl and it was mandatory on him. So here you have a complete programme; you have a programme of learning/knowledge, and then a programme of Da'wah, and a programme of rituals/'Ibādah. And they all complement each other and they all assist in building a complete Muslim personality.

The work of propagating and teaching could be draining on the heart, and without this element of 'Ibādah – one standing up and praying to Allāh ﷻ in the middle of the night – the heart could harshen and become rough, so this Qiyām Al-Layl softens the heart and it prepares the person for the rest of the day. Such things can also be said about Dhikr. Ibn Al-Qayyim talks about his Sheikh Ibn Taymiyyah, he says that every day after Salātul-Fajr, he would go out to the fields in the outskirts of Damascus and he would just sit there mentioning the name of Allāh, making Dhikr, until sunrise. So he once asked him, "Why do you do this on a daily basis?" Ibn Taymiyyah said, "This is my breakfast; if I do not have it, my body will fail me." This is food for my soul, it gives me energy for the rest of the day; if I do not have this meal in the morning, I am going to be weak for the rest of my day.

Qiyām Al-Layl was Mandatory on Rasūlullāh ﷺ and As-Sahābah رضي الله عنهم

Rasūlullāh ﷺ was strengthened by this 'Ibādah of Qiyām Al-Layl, and it is also something that Allāh made mandatory on the early Muslims because of the unique circumstances they went through. The difficulties that they had to go through are more than anything else that the Ummah would face afterwards, that is why they had to go through this intensive training. Plus, they are the core group, they are the foundation of Islām, As-Sahābah رضي الله عنهم are the generation

which Islām was built on. If you have a tent, there is this pillar in the middle that holds the whole tent; that is As- Sahābah for this religion. They were the foundation of this religion, so they had to be very strong, and that strength came from this intensive training programme that they went through in the early years of Makkah. So you had this core group which was small in number, we could say less than a hundred, who went through this training, but then these people became so strong that wherever you would put them, you would immediately see the influence they had on the people surrounding them. Al-Ansār, for example, are latecomers to Islām, Al-Ansār only became Muslim in the last half of the Da'wah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, but because the Muhājirīn came and lived with them and mixed with them and in the initial stage Rasūlullāh ﷺ made a brotherhood [between them] – you would have one Ansār and one Muhājir and they were brothers – this gave a chance for the Muhājirīn to help the Ansār in the religious aspect, and the Ansār help the Muhājirīn with the financial and the social support that they needed. But the early Sahābah ﷺ, the Muhājirīn, had this light in them that would emanate and affect the whole surrounding around them.

So we have Iqra', Qum, Qum. And remember these three words.

Response of Quraish to the Da'wah of Muhammad ﷺ

What was the response of the people of Quraish to the Da'wah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ? They responded in various different ways, and some of them were at different times, and some of them might have been [at different] stages, but these are the different responses that the people of Quraish showed towards the Message of Muhammad ﷺ, and there is a list of them; we will start talking about them now [in detail] but [first] I will go through the list:

[1] Mockery
[2] Insulting and harming the Messenger ﷺ
[3] Accusations or character assassination
[4] Deforming or defaming the Message
[5] Bargaining and negotiating with Rasūlullāh ﷺ
[6] Allurements and temptations
[7] Setting challenges

[8] Putting Muhammad ﷺ under pressure
[9] Jealousy and hatred
[10] Persecution
[11] Assassination attempts

Mockery

So Inshā'Allāh, we will start with the number one; mockery. Allāh ﷻ says: **And when they see you, [O Muhammad], they take you not except in ridicule, [saying], "Is this the one whom Allāh has sent as a Messenger?"**[52] They were saying that did Allāh not find anyone else to send? There was no one better to send except you? So they would make fun of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, they would mock him. Now, even though Rasūlullāh ﷺ belonged to the noblest family [and] he had the most outstanding character in Quraish, but because he was not the wealthiest, because he was not the most powerful, they made fun of him. People are attracted to the ones who have wealth and the ones who have power, and there is precedence in this when the Banī Isrā'īl – and the story is mentioned in Sūrah Al-Baqarah – went to their Prophet and they said, 'We want you to appoint a king over us so that we could fight in Jihād.' The Nabī appointed Tālūt to be a King and their leader. They refused, even though they were the ones who asked the Nabī to appoint for them, [and] when the Nabī appointed, they rejected, and refused to accept the leadership of Tālūt. Why? They said two things; that he does not have a lot of money; he is not wealthy, and there are people more prominent among us to be kings. **"How can he have kingship over us while we are more worthy of kingship than him and he has not been given any measure of wealth?"**[53] And when Rasūlullāh ﷺ went to At-Tā'if – and we will talk about his story in At-Tā'if – one of the men of At-Tā'if told Muhammad ﷺ, "Did Allāh not find anyone better than you to send as a Prophet?" So they would mock Muhammad ﷺ and they would make fun of him.

Insulting and Harming the Messenger ﷺ

Abu Jahl Threatens to Trample over the Neck of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and Rub his Face in Dirt

The second response that the people of Quraish showed was insulting and harming Muhammad ﷺ. In Sahīh Muslim, Abū Hurairah ؓ narrates the story; Abū Jahl came to some of the leaders of Quraish who were sitting next to Al-Ka'bah and he told them, "Are you allowing Muhammad to rub his face in the dirt?" That was his evil way of saying Sujūd. "Are you allowing Muhammad to rub his face in the dirt? If I see him do that, I will trample over his neck and I will rub his face in the dirt." Well, Rasūlullāh ﷺ did come and he started to pray, and Rasūlullāh ﷺ would pray publicly in front of anyone, so Rasūlullāh ﷺ was praying right there in front of Al-Ka'bah and Abū Jahl and his friends saw this, so Abū Jahl stood up to go and fulfil his threat. So he walked up to Muhammad ﷺ and Muhammad ﷺ was in Sujūd, and suddenly, they saw Abū Jahl falling back and he was waving with his hands like someone who was trying to repulse a danger that was about to befall him. So Abū Jahl came back and they asked him, "What had happened to you, what was wrong?" He said, "What do you mean what happened? Did you not see what happened?" They said, "No, we did not, there was nothing. All what we saw was you falling on your back and waving your hands." Abū Jahl said, "There was a trench in front of me and there was fire and wings and terror." Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "Those were the angels. If he would have come any closer to me, they would have torn him into pieces." So he saw that but everybody else did not, all what they saw was Abū Jahl retreating, and Rasūlullāh ﷺ said [that] those were the angels and they would have torn him if he came any closer.

'Uqbah Bin Abī Mu'ayt Tries to Choke Rasūlullāh ﷺ

One day, 'Uqbah Bin Abī Mu'ayt came to Rasūlullāh ﷺ next to Al-Ka'bah – and you would notice that most of these events occurred next to Al-Ka'bah because that is where Rasūlullāh ﷺ would pray publicly, and they would always try and stop him from doing that – so 'Uqbah Bin Abī Mu'ayt walked up to Muhammad ﷺ and he grabbed his clothes and he started wrapping them around the neck of Rasūlullāh ﷺ trying to choke him, until Abū Bakr ؓ stepped in and pushed 'Uqbah Bin Abī Mu'ayt away and he said, "Do you want to kill a man just because he says, 'My Lord is Allāh?' – *A'Turīdūna An Taqtulūna Rajulan Ayyaqūla Rabbī Allāh?*" The reason why you want to kill him is because he is saying my Lord is Allāh, and he pushed 'Uqbah Bin Abī Mu'ayt away. Now, for some people, they do not mind being hurt or cursed or humiliated, some people

naturally have thick-skin, they are not sensitive at all, but the Ambiyā' of Allāh, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon them all, were very sensitive and they had a lot of dignity, so such things hurt them and harmed them a lot. And the Ambiyā' of Allāh all had very respectable personalities, so when such things happened, these were very very insulting events to them. And this was hurting Rasūlullāh ﷺ a lot, but he would continue with his Da'wah and go on and he would follow what Allāh ﷻ told him [to do]: ***Wa A'rid 'Anil Jāhilīn* – And turn away from the ignorant**.[54] Just ignore the ignorant, ignore them. Rasūlullāh ﷺ would not respond to them, would not fight with them, he would go on with his work.

'Uqbah Bin Abī Mu'ayt Dumps Contents of a Camels Abdomen on Rasūlullāh ﷺ while he is in Sujūd

Another incident that was narrated by Al-Bukhārī; Rasūlullāh ﷺ again was praying next to Al-Ka'bah, and Abū Jahl came to the leaders of Quraish who would always meet and sit next to Al-Ka'bah, and he told them, "So and so has slaughtered a camel; who will go and pick up the contents of the abdomen of the camel and dump it on Rasūlullāh ﷺ in Salāh?" So the most evil among them, 'Uqbah Bin Abī Mu'ayt, he picked up the challenge and he went and grabbed all of the insides of the abdomen, the intestines and the stomach, and he carried it, and he waited until Rasūlullāh ﷺ was in the position of Sujūd, and he dumped it over him. Rasūlullāh ﷺ continued with his Sujūd as if nothing happened, and then his daughter Fātimah ؓ saw what happened to her father. And by the way, it is very hurting to children to see their parents being humiliated. And psychiatrists in Falastīn say that this is affecting the psychology of the children in Falastīn when they see their fathers and their mothers [being] abused and kicked and hit by Israeli soldiers. So you have an entire generation of children who are growing up seeing their parents going through all of this abuse. And this psychiatrist was saying that it leaves some very dangerous marks and scars on their personalities, especially for children; it is very detrimental for them to see their parents go through humiliation. So Fātimah ؓ saw this happening to her father and her father continued in Sujūd, so she ran up to him and she started picking all of that dirt from the shoulders of her father. When Rasūlullāh ﷺ finished his Salāh, he made a Du'ā', and he made this Du'ā' publicly in front of the people of Quraish, he said, "O Allāh! Punish Abū Jahl,

and ʻUtbah Bin Rabīʻah, and Shaybah Bin Rabīʻah, Al-Walīd Bin ʻUtbah, Ummayyah Bin Khalaf, and ʻUqbah Bin Abī Muʻayt." He made Duʻā' against seven, [but] I counted six. ʻAbdullāh Ibn Masʻūd, the narrator of the Hadīth, said, "I forgot who was the seventh." So Rasūlullāh ﷺ made Duʻā' against them, and this was a very rare thing, that Rasūlullāh ﷺ would make Duʻā' against some people, but it got so bad [and] Rasūlullāh ﷺ was so hurt [that] he made Duʻā' against them, and he made Duʻā' in front of Al-Kaʼbah. ʻAbdullāh Ibn Masʻūd said, "I have seen with my own eyes all of these men killed in the Battle of Badr." All of them. That was the fulfilment of the Duʻā' of Rasūlullāh ﷺ; they all died on *Kufr*.

Now, I just gave a few examples, but there are many other examples that one could go through that illuminate this point further.

Character Assassination of Muhammad ﷺ

They Would Slander Rasūlullāh ﷺ with the Worst Names

Number Three: Accusing the Prophet ﷺ, or what we could refer to as character assassination. They would try to attack the character of the Messenger to destroy the Message. So they would accuse Rasūlullāh ﷺ of being a magician. **And they say, "O you upon whom the message has been sent down, indeed you are mad."**[55] ***Wa Qālal Kāfirūna Hādhā Sāhirun Kadhdhāb* – And the Disbelievers say, "This is a magician and a liar."**[56] And they said he is a soothsayer – *Kāhin*. They used whatever slandering terms they could use, they would just throw them at Rasūlullāh ﷺ in order to assassinate the character of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, and the purpose of that was to destroy the Message itself, because Allāh says: **We know that you, [O Muhammad], are saddened by what they say. And indeed, they do not call you untruthful, but it is the verses of Allāh that the wrongdoers reject.** [57] They do not disbelieve you, but they are rejecting the signs of Allāh. Allāh ﷻ is saying that they do not really have a problem with you, they do not disbelieve you; deep in their hearts they know that you are the Truthful and the Honest, but it is because they want to reject the Message [that] they are attacking you. So all of these attacks that you are receiving is not because of your character, it is because of the Religion. And this would take us back to the words of Waraqah Bin Naufal; in the early days he told Muhammad ﷺ, "You will be driven out of your land." Rasūlullāh ﷺ said,

"Me?! They would drive me out of my land?!" Rasūlullāh ﷺ knew that he was so admired and loved by the people of Makkah, he could not imagine how one day they would drive him out of his land, but then Waraqah Bin Naufal said, "Anyone who would present to his people with a Message similar to yours would be fought." He will have enemies. So it is not you, it is the Message. So now they were accusing Muhammad ﷺ in order to block the Message.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ would give Da'wah to the Masses in the Marketplaces

Rasūlullāh ﷺ would go into the marketplace, and the marketplaces in Makkah served not only as a place for doing business, [but it was also a place] where they would have [events such as] competitions in poetry, and they would have competitions in speeches; they would hold those competitions in those marketplaces, so the marketplace was not strictly for business, but it was also the cultural centre; that is where the speakers would come, sort of like Hyde Park; speakers from all over the world would go and just congregate there! Although there was a difference; in Hyde Park you do not necessarily get the best, but in *Sūq 'Ukāz* you would get the best. The best speakers of Arabia would go to Sūq 'Ukāz and they would present their works; their poetry and their speeches, and the best of these poems would be hung on the wall of Al-Ka'bah, they were called *Al-Mu'allaqāt* – The hanged poems. Rasūlullāh ﷺ would enter these marketplaces and speak to the masses. In this Hadīth narrated by Al-Imām Ahmad, Rabī'ah Bin 'Abbād says, "I saw the Messenger of Allāh in the market of Dhul-Majāz and he was saying, 'O you people, say there is no God but Allāh and you will prosper.'" That was his message to the people; Say Lā Ilāha Illallāh; *Tuflihū* – Say there is no God but Allāh and you would be successful. And he would repeat that message again and again and walk and meet different people.

Abū Lahab Tells People Rasūlullāh ﷺ is a Liar and Eliminates his Hardwork

Now, Rabī'ah said, "There was a man following him, and whoever Rasūlullāh ﷺ would speak to, this man would go and speak to them and say, 'Do not believe him, he is a liar.'" So Rasūlullāh ﷺ would go and speak to a group of people and tell them, 'Say Lā Ilāha Illallāh; you would succeed,' [and] when Rasūlullāh ﷺ would leave, Abū Lahab would come in and tell the same people, 'Do not

believe him, he is a liar.' Now, Rabī'ah Bin 'Abbād[58] said, "I asked who that man was, they said this is his uncle Abū Lahab." Rabī'ah Bin 'Abbād was not from Makkah, he said "I asked who that man was, they said this is his uncle." Imagine how difficult this was; Abū Lahab was unwinding whatever was being winded by Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Whatever Rasūlullāh ﷺ would do, Abū Lahab would go behind him and destroy it. We gain encouragement by seeing the fruits of our efforts, we have to be rewarded one way or another, otherwise we would not have motivation to go on. In our work, unless there is some kind of reward, it would be impossible for us to work. And we are rewarded in different forms; one of them is financial – you are being paid for what you do, another form of reward is recognition, third form of reward is support that you would get from workers or your leaders. But it would be impossible to go on if everything is against you at your work, and what keeps you going is seeing the fruits of your effort. Imagine that we arrange this course and it does not work out, and then we try to arrange it again a month later and it does not work out, no one shows up, we try it again third time, no one shows up, do you think we will have the spirit to continue doing this again and again? It becomes very difficult. Rasūlullāh ﷺ and many of the Ambiyā' would continue doing the same thing again and again and nothing would happen. And Nūh ﷺ for example, he is giving his people Da'wah day and night, publicly and privately, with no response, no response whatsoever, he is seeing no fruits of his effort at all; that is very difficult, especially when we are talking about nine hundred and fifty years. Rasūlullāh ﷺ in Makkah is going and speaking to these people who do not know him, he is speaking to foreigners in this fair of Dhul-Majāz and 'Ukāz, and as soon as he speaks to the people, someone comes and distorts his reputation by saying he is a liar. Nevertheless, Rasūlullāh ﷺ had the encouragement to continue and speak to the people and go on and on neglecting what his uncle was doing to him. Especially in the society of Arabia where there is seniority, what can Rasūlullāh ﷺ do to stop his uncle? So he would just leave him alone and continue with his Da'wah. And in another narration it says that Abū Lahab would go and tell the people, "O people, let not this man entice you away from your religion, the religion of your forefathers." And this was narrated by Al-Bayhaqī.

Al-Walīd Bin Mughīrah Holds Meeting to have a Unified Opinion against Rasūlullāh ﷺ

Another example narrated by Al-Bayhaqī and Al-Hākim; Right before the season of Hajj, Al-Walīd Bin Mughīrah who was the elder of Quraish at the time, he addressed a meeting with the leaders of the community and he told them, "The season of Hajj is approaching, Pilgrimage, and the delegations of the Arabs are going to start pouring in, let us unify our opinion regarding this associate of yours and let us not contradict each other." What Al-Walīd Bin Mughīrah is referring to here is that the season of Pilgrimage is coming and the Arabs are going to start coming to Makkah, and Muhammad ﷺ will be visiting them and speaking to them, we do not want to contradict each other in our opinion regarding him, so we do not want some people saying that he is a liar, some people saying that he is a magician, some people saying that he is a soothsayer, we have to have a unified opinion in order to go to the people and warn them from this man. So the people said, "You tell us what you think, we will abide by it." Al-Walīd Bin Mughīrah said, "I want to hear from you." They said, "We will claim that he is a soothsayer." He responded, "No, he is no soothsayer. I have seen soothsayers and he does not engage in the rhymed mumbling doggerel they use." [He was saying that] people are not going to believe you if you say that he is a soothsayer. They said, "Well, let us say that he is crazy; possessed by spirits." He said, "He is not crazy. We have seen and known those who are crazy and he has none of their choking erratic movement and mumbling." He does not show the signs of people who are insane or possessed[59] by Jinn. They said, "Well, let us claim that he is a poet." He said, "No, he is no poet. We know poetry in all its metrical forms and what he speaks is not poetry." Al-Walīd Ibn Mughīrah in another narration says, "I am the most expert among you in poetry, I know all of its forms, and Qurān is not poetry." They said, "Let us claim that he is a sorcerer." He said, "No, he is no sorcerer. We have seen sorcerers and their magic and he does not do any of their tying and untying." So basically they mentioned all what they had and Al-Walīd Ibn Mughīrah was saying that this will not make sense. Eventually they asked, "Well, what are we going to say?!" So he thought about it for a while and then he came back and said, "Well let us just say that he is a sorcerer." Before that he said, "By God, there is splendour in what he speaks. In essence, he is like a palm tree whose branches give much fruit. All you have been saying will not be

believed. The closest thing is for you to say [that] this man is a sorcerer who comes between a man and his religion, a man and his father, a man and his wife, a man and his brother, and a man and his tribe." That is the closest that we can come to agree on that he is a sorcerer. That is when Allāh ﷻ revealed the Āyāt: **Indeed, he thought and deliberated. So may he be destroyed [for] how he deliberated. Then may he be destroyed [for] how he deliberated. Then he considered [again]; Then he frowned and scowled; Then he turned back and was arrogant. And said, "This is not but magic imitated [from others]. This is not but the word of a human being."**[60]

Deforming the Message

Number Four: Deforming the Message. An-Nadr Bin Hārith went to Persia specifically to learn stories; he went all the way to Persia to learn stories. He came back, and whenever he would see Rasūlullāh ﷺ sitting with a group of people, he would call the people and call others and say, "Come to me, I have better stories to tell. My stories are better." And he was saying it is all about stories; what Muhammad ﷺ is speaking about, the past, all of this, these are just fables, tales, [and] I have something better to offer. Allāh ﷻ says: **And they say, "Legends of the former peoples which he has written down, and they are dictated to him morning and afternoon."**[61] So they were saying that this is just storytelling, tales, that are fabricated, untrue; who knows what happened to Mūsā ﷺ? Who knows what happened to 'Īsā? Who knows what happened to the other Ambiyā'? He is just telling you stories. There is no basis of what he is narrating to you.

Bargaining and Negotiations

Number Five: Bargaining and negotiations. The people of Quraish came to Muhammad ﷺ and said, "Let us make a deal, we will agree to worship Allāh for one day, and you worship our gods for another day." Rasūlullāh ﷺ told them, "I would never agree to such a thing." They came back to him some time later and they said, "We have a better offer to make, we will worship Allāh for a week and you worship our gods for one day." He said, "No." They came back again, "We have a better offer to make, we will worship Allāh for a month, and you just give us one day." Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "No". Allāh ﷻ revealed the Āyah:

***Waddū Law Tud'hinu Fa-Yud'hinūn* – They wish that you would soften [in your position], so they would soften [toward you].**[62] They would wish that you would compromise so that they can compromise with you. Their religion is man-made; they can compromise in it, they can change it, it is okay for them to worship Allāh for a day and their gods for another day, it is fine, it is a man-made religion, there is no control on it, but Rasūlullāh ﷺ is receiving Wahī from Allāh, he cannot change it, so he cannot compromise on the Message, the Message does not change. Even if you worship Allāh for a year, I am not going to give you one day, I am not going to give you a day from my whole life. **"O Disbelievers, I do not worship what you worship. Nor are you worshippers of what I worship."** [63] **"For you is your religion, and for me is my religion."**[64] And they tried all different ways of bargaining; it would never work with Muhammad ﷺ. Now, they would become upset because this is something they could afford to do, and they were wondering how come Rasūlullāh ﷺ cannot do it? Why do we have to always keep on compromising and bargaining and he is not reciprocating? And obviously that aggravated them further, but Muhammad ﷺ was telling them that I am just a conveyor of a Message, it is not from myself, it is from Allāh.

Allurements & Temptations and Setting Challenges

The Leaders of Quraish Try to Allure and Tempt Rasūlullāh ﷺ

[Number Six:] Allurements and Temptations, and Number Seven: Setting Challenges. This following narration points out to both number six and seven, it is a narration by Ibn Ishāq. Ibn 'Abbās ﷺ said, "The leaders from Quraish met next to Al Ka'bah and they said, 'Let us send for Muhammad and speak with him.'" They [were saying that] we want to exhaust all different ways and we do not want to give him any excuse, so let us try everything with him. So they sent someone to call Muhammad ﷺ. Ibn 'Abbās says that Muhammad ﷺ came rushing, he was eager to come and meet with the leaders because he thought that there might be a change of heart; maybe now they want to respond, maybe they are willing to soften their stance, so he came to them in a hurry. When he arrived there, they told Muhammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, "O Muhammad, we sent for you to reconcile with you." So it started with this very nice statement, so Rasūlullāh ﷺ was getting an impression that

finally they are softening. They said, "O Muhammad, we sent for you to reconcile with you. By God, we know of no Arab man who has ever brought his people as much trouble as you have. You have reviled the forebearers, criticised the religion, ridiculed the values, cursed the gods, and divided our community. Every unpleasant thing possible you have done to make a rift between you and us." In another narration they said, "We have never seen a person who has brought so much evil on his people like you have." And now they were starting to throw out the temptations to Muhammad ﷺ, they said, "O Muhammad, if you are presenting us with this Message because you are in need of money, we will collect for you money until we make you the wealthiest among us. O Muhammad, if you are coming up with this religion because you are seeking power, we will appoint you as a king over us. O Muhammad, if you are presenting us with this religion because you are desiring women, we will choose for you the best ten women in Quraish and marry them all to you. O Muhammad, if you are presenting us with this Message because you are obsessed with demons, we will spend whatever is needed to cure you, even if we have to exhaust all of our wealth in the process. Tell us what you want." Rasūlullāh ﷺ responded and said, "What you have said does not apply to me. I have not brought you my Message seeking your money, nor honour among you, nor sovereignty over you. God has sent me to you as a Messenger, He has revealed a document to me and has ordered me to bring you good news and warn you. I have brought you a Message from my Lord and have given you counsel. If you accept what I have brought to you, then that is for your good on Earth and in the Hereafter, if you reject it, I will await God's decision until He decides between myself and you." These are the approximate words of Muhammad ﷺ.

The Kuffār of Quraish Set up Challenges for Rasūlullāh ﷺ

They said, "Alright, if you are turning down all of our offers, then you know how narrow our land is." You know, for those of you who have seen Makkah, Makkah is very narrow valleys surrounded by mountains; mountains all over. And it is a very rough environment; the weather of it and all of these mountains. And it is very narrow. So they said, "O Muhammad, you know how narrow our land is and how poor we are and how difficult our life is, so how about you go to your Lord who has sent you and you tell Him to move these mountains away,

just level them, and give us more space and land. And then why do you not ask Him to make some rivers flow in Makkah like the rivers of Syria and ‘Irāq, we want to have rivers like other people have. And then we want you also to go to your Lord and to tell Him to bring back to life some of our forefathers, and we want you to bring back to life Qusaÿ Bin Kilāb because he was a truth-telling Sheikh, and we want to ask him if what you are saying is true or not. And then Muhammad, if you do that and our forefathers agree to what you say, then we will follow you.” Muhammad ﷺ responded and said, “This is not why I have been sent. I have only brought to you from God what He has sent me with, I have informed you of what I was sent to convey to you. If you accept it then that is your good fortune on Earth and in the Hereafter, if you reject it, I must wait patiently for God’s decree and for Him to judge between us.” They continued and they said, “Well, how about if you then ask your Lord to send down an angel who will witness to your truth. And also, we want you to ask Him to give us some castles, gardens, treasures of gold and silver. And then how about you do this; why do you not tell Him to fulfil your needs, because we see that you are seeking a livelihood just like we are, you are doing business. Now, if you are so close to your God, why do you not tell Him to give you some wealth so that we will know how prestigious you are in His Eyes? That is if you are claiming to be a Messenger.” [They were saying] how come you are like every one of us, you are going and working?! Tell your Lord if He loves you to give you some wealth. Again, Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, “I am not going to do so, I am not one to ask such things of his Lord. That is not why I have been sent to you. God has sent me to announce and warn. If you accept my Message then that is your good fortune here on Earth and in the afterlife, if you reject it, then I must be patient and leave the matter up to God until He decides between myself and you.” They said, “Well then fine, ask your Lord to bring down the punishment that you have been promising us. Come on, let Him bring the sky upon our heads right now, show us if you can.” Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, “That is up to God, if He wishes He will do that to you.” They commented and said, “O Muhammad, does your Lord not know these questions that we are asking you? How come He is not helping you in giving you an answer? We know who is teaching you all of this, you are being taught this Qurān of yours by a man in Yamāmah called Ar-Rahmān, and we are never going to believe in that man called Ar-Rahmān.” All of it just

fabricating lies one over another. This man in Yamāmah called Ar-Rahmān; something they made up and fabricated.

Nothing Will Work with Some People

One of them said, "We worship the angels who are God's daughters." Another said, "We will not believe you till you bring us God and the angels before us."[65] It was all mockery and insults, and then they left. One of them came back to Rasūlullāh ﷺ, so one might think that this man 'Abdullāh Ibn Umayyah felt sorry for what happened, and maybe he wanted to come and apologise, or maybe he wanted to come and become Muslim, especially because he was a cousin of Rasūlullāh ﷺ; his mother was Rasūlullāh's ﷺ aunt. Well, 'Abdullāh Ibn Umayyah came to Rasūlullāh ﷺ and said, "O Muhammad, your people have offered you the best offers and you turned them down. And then they asked you to perform miracles for them and you refused. They asked you to bring down punishment on them and you did not. Now I tell you what, I am not going to believe in you until you bring a ladder that goes all the way up to the heaven, and then you climb it while I am watching you, and you go up to Allāh and you ask Him to write down for you a letter stating that you are His Prophet and have Him sign it, and then we want that document to come down accompanied by four angels to be witnesses that you are a Messenger from God. And then you know what? *Even* if you do that, I think I am not going to believe in you." Dead end; nothing is going to work with these people. ***Wa Iyyaraw Kulla Āyatil Lā Yu'minū Bihā* – And if they should see every sign, they will not believe in it.**[66] This was the environment Rasūlullāh ﷺ was working in, dealing with these types of people. It is a dead end, you cannot go any further; whatever you are going to do, I am telling you beforehand, I am not going to believe. Even if Allāh sends down a message from Himself personally, with four angels to witness it, it is not going to be enough.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ went back home, he was regretful at the failure to achieve what he had expected from his people, because he went with all of this good expectation that now my people have changed; that was the impression he got when they invited him, and then suddenly he was turned down in this ruthless fashion.

Putting Muhammad ﷺ Under Pressure

Number Eight: They would try to put Muhammad ﷺ under pressure. They were persistent, they would never give up, they would keep on trying every method, including using his close uncle Abū Tālib to pressure him. In this narration that we have over her, ‘Aqīl, the son of Abū Tālib, he narrates and says that the people of Quraish came to Abū Tālib and they told him, “This nephew of yours is disrupting and disturbing us in our meetings and in our mosque,” so they considered the Da’wah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ to be disruption, “so tell him to stay away from us.” Abū Tālib told ‘Aqīl, “Go and call Muhammad for me.” So ‘Aqīl said, “I found him in *Kanas*.” Kanas means a very small room or a tent, and it was noon time, very hot in Makkah. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ came to meet his uncle Abū Tālib. His uncle told him, “Your people are complaining and saying that you are disrupting them and you are disturbing them in their meetings, so why do you not stop?” And Abū Tālib was not speaking to Muhammad ﷺ in a tone of an order; ‘Do this!’ But he was telling him as an advice; ‘It is better.’ [He was saying,] ‘So that you would not harm or have your people upset, how about if you stop disturbing them or disrupting their meetings?’ [He was saying this] in a very kind way. Rasūlullāh ﷺ looked at the sky and he pointed towards the sun and told Abū Tālib, “O my uncle, do you see the sun?” He said, “Yes”. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, “I am no more capable of stopping that than you are of getting me a flame from it.” In other words, it is impossible for me to stop this just like it is impossible for you to get a flame from the sun. This is part of me, Da’wah is my life, spreading Islām is my mission, I cannot give it up, it is impossible. And you must have heard of the narration where Rasūlullāh ﷺ says, “If they put the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left hand, I would not give up this matter until Allāh ﷻ judges or I lose my life.” This narration is weaker, but we find the same meaning in the strong narration, that no matter what, I will continue with this mission. His uncle told him, “O my nephew, you are telling the truth, I believe you, go ahead and continue.” So Abū Tālib was telling Muhammad ﷺ I believe you that you cannot give this up; go ahead and I will support you, do what Allāh has told you to do. We see from this that the people of Quraish were using every method to try to sway Muhammad ﷺ, and they would never give up. Even when the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ told the Sahābah to go to *Habashah* – Abyssinia, so that they could flee from the persecution, still Quraish were not satisfied with that and they sent a delegation

[to Abyssinia] to ask An-Najāshī to turn the Muslims over. Why? Were the Muslims in Abyssinia any threat to Quraish politically? No. Were they a threat economically? No. So what is the reason Quraish are so persistent in following the Muslims even though the Muslims left them alone? So the issue here is that even if Rasūlullāh ﷺ would have stopped, they would not have left Rasūlullāh ﷺ alone. The people of Quraish wanted to stop this Message by all means possible. And if you would leave them alone, they will not leave you alone.

Jealousy and Hatred

Number Nine: Jealousy and Hatred. Al-Walīd Bin Mughīrah, one of the elders of Quraish, said, "If Allāh wanted to choose a Prophet, how come he did not choose me? I am more wealthy and wise and older than Muhammad ﷺ!" And there was a similar claim made by a man in At-Tā'if. Now, the two prominent towns of Hijāz were Makkah and At-Tā'if, so Allāh ﷻ revealed the Āyah: **And they said, "Why was this Qur'an not sent down upon a great man from [one of] the two cities?"**[67] One of the two cities here is referring to Makkah and At-Tā'if.

Al-Mughīrah Bin Shu'bah, who was from At-Tā'if, was visiting Makkah, and according to this Hadīth narrated by Al-Bayhaqī, Al-Mughīrah Bin Shu'bah said, "My first contact with Rasūlullāh ﷺ happened one day when I was walking with Abū Jahl in the streets of Makkah and we ran into Muhammad ﷺ. So he walked up to us and he spoke to Abū Jahl and said, 'Why do you not follow me, believe in Allāh, believe in Islam?'" He was giving Abū Jahl Da'wah. "Abū Jahl responded by saying, 'O Muhammad, when are you going to stop cursing our gods? If you want us to testify that you have fulfilled your mission, we will testify for you, and if I knew you were telling the truth, I would have already followed you.' Muhammad ﷺ left." Rasūlullāh ﷺ was telling them again and again that my role is to convey a Message, it is not my role to convert you, that is up to Allāh, all what I want to do is to fulfil my mission. So Abū Jahl was saying that if you want us to witness for you in front of Allāh [then] we will do so, we will tell Allāh that you have done your job, but just leave us alone, because if I knew that you were telling the truth then I would have already followed you. So Muhammad ﷺ left. Al-Mughīrah said, "Abū Jahl looked at me and said, 'I know that he is telling the truth, but there is something holding me

back. The descendants of Qusaÿ said we want to have *Hijābah*," – remember, these are the honours of Quraish, the power and the authority of Quraish, we talked about it when we talked about Qusaÿ Bin Kilāb, if you remember. *Al-Hijābah* is the guardianship of Al-Ka'bah, *An-Nadwah* means the assembly of Quraish, *Siqāyah* and *Rifādah* is providing the Pilgrims with food and water, *Al-Liwā'* is the banner of war. – So Abu Jahl said, "I know that this man is telling the truth, but there is something holding me back. The descendants of Qusaÿ said we want the authority of An-Nadwah; we gave it to them, we want the authority of Hijābah; we gave it to them, we want the authority of Al-Liwā'; we gave it to them, we want the authority of Rifādah and Siqāyah; we gave it to them, and now when we started picking up and competing with them and we were running neck to neck, they come up and say that we have a Prophet among us, how can we compete with that? By God we are never going to accept this.'" Abū Jahl is saying that this is a matter of competition, a power struggle between us and the family of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. They have been given all of the authorities of Makkah, and now we want to catch up with them, compete with them. We can compete with them in providing for the Pilgrims [and] things like that, but we cannot compete in Prophethood. None of us can compete with the Qurān that has been given to Muhammad ﷺ, so we are never going to admit that that is the truth, because if we do, that means they would have won against us. So it is a matter of power and authority. So you can see the element of jealousy and hatred and not willing to give up power. And that is why you would find again and again in Qurān that usually the ones who are the most outspoken and violent in their rejection of the Message of the Prophets are the ones in authority, the people in power. Why? Because they feel that this is a Message that will change the status quo and will strip us from our abilities to take advantage of others and to enslave others, this is a religion that will free people from worshipping people into worshipping Allāh. And these are referred to in Qurān as *Al-Mala'*. Whenever you would have Al-Mala' in Qurān, it is referring to the leadership. ***Wa Qālal-Mala'u Min Qawmih***. And this comes up with Fir'aun, it comes up with the People of 'Ād, Sālih; you would find that it is Al-Mala'.

Persecution

Rasūlullāh ﷺ was Never Persecuted but his Companions Were

[Number] Ten: Persecution. Now, even though Rasūlullāh ﷺ was insulted and harmed and false accusations were directed towards him, he was not persecuted, and that is part of the protection of Allāh towards Muhammad ﷺ. Allāh ﷻ has protected Muhammad ﷺ in the early years through his uncle Abū Tālib, and later on they would try to assassinate him and Allāh ﷻ would protect him even though his uncle Abū Tālib had passed away. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ was not really persecuted, but it was his followers who were persecuted, and this was the opinion of Ibn Ishāq, he says, "Allāh has protected Muhammad ﷺ because of His love of His Messenger, and Allāh has protected him through his uncle Abū Tālib." These are the words of Ibn Ishāq. But the persecution of the followers of Rasūlullāh ﷺ used to hurt the Messenger of Allāh a lot, because he cared about them so much, and pretty much all of them went through one form of persecution or another. In one statement of Ibn Ishāq, he says, "They would wrap them up in shields of iron and leave them in the sun to burn." So they would clothe them in shields of iron; steel, and they would leave them in the hot sun of Makkah. Now, the strongest among the Sahābah in his response in fighting the persecution was Bilāl Bin Rabāh ؓ. The more they would persecute him, the stronger he would become. He was asked, "How come when you were punished and tortured you would say, '*Ahadun Ahad* – Allāh is One, Allāh is One,' how come you choose that slogan?" Bilāl said, "Because I found out that when I would say Ahadun Ahad, it would make them the angriest; this statement would anger them the most, and that is why I would say Ahadun Ahad." So Bilāl was not looking for a way to reduce the punishment, he did not care. And the statement of Ibn Ishāq is, "*Bā'ah Nafsahū Lillāh* – he sold himself to Allāh ﷻ," he gave up his life to Allāh. He would say Ahadun Ahad and Umayyah Bin Khalaf would become angry and would add [to] the punishment and Bilāl would only say it louder, he would not give up.

The Sahābah went through Different Forms of Torture

Now, they went through different forms of torture, and the torture was not only limited to the slaves and servants, but even some of the nobility were tortured. 'Uthmān Ibn 'Affān, belonging to one of the noblest families of Quraish, Banū

Umayyah, he was wrapped in a carpet and then they would jump over him and crush him inside that carpet. And you are familiar with some of the stories of persecution that happened to the slaves, like what happened to Sumaiyyah and her husband and her son; Yāsir and Sumaiyyah were both killed under the severe tormenting of Abū Jahl. In one narration it states that Abū Jahl struck Sumaiyyah with a spear in her private parts until he killed her. And all of this was becoming too much on [their son] Sayyidinā ʻAmmār ﷺ; it was a combination of psychological pain and physical pain. Physical pain because of the torment he was going through, plus [psychological pain because of] seeing his mother and father go through this severe punishment and sad ending. ʻAmmār Ibn Yāsir buckled under this pressure and he spoke some words against Muhammad ﷺ. Now, when he woke up from the pain, he went to Rasūlullāh ﷺ sad and sorry for what had happened and he narrated the incident to Muhammad ﷺ. Allāh ﷻ revealed an Āyah dealing with that particular situation saying that one is excused to speak some words with the tongue under this torture if the heart is confident on Faith. If the heart is firm on Īmān and has Yaqīn, it is okay for a person to speak [such words] because: ***Lā Yukallifullāhu Nafsan Illā Wusʻahā*** **– Allāh does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity.**[68] Allāh ﷻ does not overburden a person; this is unbearable pain that ʻAmmār Ibn Yāsir was going through.

So this persecution continued with almost all of the Sahābah with a few exceptions; the ones who had some strong backing of their families, and had some sympathy from some of their Non-Believing relatives. Now, the severest in his punishment and the one who would actually mobilise the people of Quraish was Abū Jahl, he was their leader in evil. Ibn Ishāq states:

> "That sinner Abū Jahl was the one who incited the men of Quraish against them. When he heard of a man of status and influence who had accepted Islām, he would upbraid and insult him, saying, 'You have abandoned the religion of your father, a man better than you. We will depreciate your values, deride your opinions, and destroy your reputation.' If the Muslim were a merchant, he would say, 'We will by God boycott doing business with you, and we will ruin you.' If the Muslim was defenceless, Abū Jahl would beat him up and incite others against him. May Allāh damn and punish him."

So Abū Jahl was the spearhead of the effort of Quraish against the Muslims in Makkah.

'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb had a slave-girl who he would torture, and sometimes he would stop. And to show you his personality! 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb, when he would stop, he would tell her, "Do not think I am giving you a break because I am having sympathy on you, the only reason why I stopped is because I am tired, otherwise I would continue." But Allāh ﷻ, *Yahdī May-Yashā'* – Allāh ﷻ guides whomever He wills.

Assassination Attempts

[Number] Eleven: When Quraish's attempts of character assassinations failed, they attempted to assassinate the character [itself]. They tried to destroy the Message by distorting the image of the Messenger. When that did not work, they tried to eliminate the Messenger. And these attempts occurred after Abū Tālib passed away. They knew that they had no way of assassinating Muhammad ﷺ during the life of Abū Tālib, but when he passed away, they attempted to assassinate him. Allāh ﷻ says: **And [remember, O Muhammad], when those who disbelieved plotted against you to restrain you or kill you or evict you [from Makkah]. But they plan, and Allāh plans. And Allāh is the best of planners.**[69] So the attempts were made, but Allāh ﷻ would protect him, and we will talk about one of these attempts when we talk about Hijrah.

So these were the various methods that the people of Quraish used at one time or another during the era of Makkah.

Response of Rasūlullāh ﷺ

Rasūlullāh's ﷺ Response when Khabbāb Ibn Al-Aratt ﷺ asks him to make Du'ā'

What was the response of Rasūlullāh ﷺ? How would he respond to all of this? In Al-Bukhārī, Khabbāb Ibn Al-Aratt, who was one of the Sahābah who went through a lot, he went to Rasūlullāh ﷺ while the Messenger of Allāh was leaning his back towards Al-Ka'bah, and he walked up to Muhammad ﷺ and said, "*Yā Rasūlullāh, Alā Tad'u Lanā, Alā Tastansirū Lanā?* – O Messenger of

Allāh, why do you not make Du‘ā' for us?" That was all what he said, but the message implies that we are going through a lot; why do you not ask Allāh to ease the pain that we were going through? And Khabbāb Ibn Al-Aratt was going through a lot himself. One day, later on, when ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb was the Khalīfah, ‘Umar was asking all of the people around to talk about their experiences in Makkah, what did you go through? So when the turn came on Khabbāb Ibn Al-Aratt, he did not speak, all what he did was lift his shirt and expose his back, that was it. ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb said, "I have never seen something like this, what happened to you?" Khabbāb Ibn Al-Aratt had deep black holes in his back. He said, "When I was in Makkah, the people of Quraish would bring some small rocks and burn them on fire until they turned red, and then they would lay them on the hot sand in the desert of Makkah and they would throw me on top of it. So these rocks would burn through my flesh, and I would hear the burning of my flesh, and I would smell my fat." [It was like] grease was burning. He said, "I would smell the smoke coming off from my back." So Khabbāb Ibn Al-Aratt had something to complain about, this was severe pain that he was going through, and all what he asked for is, "*Yā Rasūlullāh*, *Alā Tastansirū Lanā?* – O Rasūlullāh, why do you not ask Allāh to give us victory?" What was the response of Rasūlullāh ﷺ? Rasūlullāh ﷺ sat straight and his face turned red – and that would happen to Rasūlullāh ﷺ when he would become angry – and then he said, "A Believer among those who were before you used to be combed with iron combs that would separate their flesh and nerves from their bones, but they would never desert their religion. And they would bring one of them and place a saw on top of their heads, and they would be cut into two halves, yet they would never give up their religion. In the name of Allāh, Allāh will give His religion victory until a traveller will go from Sana‘ā' all the way to Hadramaut fearing no one but Allāh."

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Lessons from this Hadīth

What can we learn from this Hadīth?

Be Patient

Number One: Rasūlullāh ﷺ is asking us to be patient. Be patient, even if you are going through a lot, be patient, never give up. [Despite] all what Khabbāb Ibn Al-Aratt was going through, still Rasūlullāh ﷺ was telling him [to] be patient.

Victory Comes Through Stages

The second lesson: Allāh ﷻ has some laws, just like there are laws of nature, there are laws of history, there are laws of sociology, there are laws of psychology, and there are laws in the establishment of Religion. And you will have to go through the stages, and Allāh ﷻ will not give you an exception; you will have to go through what the nations before you went through. This is what they went through; the same will happen with you. And Rasūlullāh ﷺ wanted his Ummah to be the best of nations; if the people before were patient, I want my Ummah to be more patient, if the people before were strong, I want my people to be stronger, and that is why Rasūlullāh ﷺ was angry. He wants the best in his Ummah, he wants his Ummah to show the best example, he wants to be proud of us on the Day of Judgement. Therefore dear brothers and sisters, we have to live up to what Rasūlullāh ﷺ expects from us. He wants to meet us on the Day of Judgment and see us and he wants to be proud of us, and Rasūlullāh ﷺ has stated this in a few Ahādīth, for example in one Hadīth Rasūlullāh ﷺ says, "I want you to get married and to multiply, because I want to be proud with your numbers on the Day of Judgment." He even wants to be proud with our numbers, so he is asking us to have a lot of kids, and he is asking us to get married. And Rasūlullāh ﷺ said in another Hadīth, "I saw a huge nation in front of his eyes, so I asked the angels who were accompanying me, 'Is this my Ummah?' They said, 'No, this is not your Ummah, this is the Ummah of Mūsā, these are Banī Isrā'īl.'" So Banī Isrā'īl is the second largest Ummah after the Ummah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, they are *huge* in numbers. So the greatest Ummah after the Ummah of Muhammad ﷺ is the Children of Israel. [Rasūlullāh ﷺ continues], "And then the angels told me, 'Look at your right side,' so I looked and I saw people filling the horizon. They told me, 'Look at your left side,' and I looked and I saw a people filling the horizon. The angels told me, 'This is your Ummah. In addition to them, Allāh will give you seventy thousand who will enter Paradise without going through reckoning.'" Rasūlullāh ﷺ said in another narration of the Hadīth, "I was very impressed by their looks. I was so

impressed by their looks, I was proud." And the commentators of the Hadīth said that Rasūlullāh ﷺ was impressed because he saw on them the signs of Sujūd and Wudū', and that made light shine out of their faces. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ loves this, he loves to see his Ummah in the best shape and form.

So he was telling Khabbāb Ibn Al-Aratt, 'You have to be patient. This is what happened to the people before. You have to go through that and you have to show a better example.'

Sana'ā' and Hadramaut

Third lesson to be learnt: Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "Allāh will complete His Religion until a traveller will leave from Sana'ā' all the way to Hadramaut, fearing no one but Allāh." How come Rasūlullāh ﷺ chose Sana'ā' and Hadramaut? Rasūlullāh was in Makkah, why did he not use Makkah as a reference point? And since they were insecure, how come he did not speak about their insecurity, how come Rasūlullāh ﷺ is bringing an example from Yemen? Both Sana'ā' and Hadramaut are in Yemen. Now, since this relates to someone going through insecurity in Makkah, how come Rasūlullāh ﷺ did not say Makkah and Madīnah? Makkah and Hajar? Makkah and Syria? Or how come he did not choose two reference points in another country? How come Sana'ā' and Hadramaut? There is something interesting in the choice of Rasūlullāh ﷺ of these particular two areas in Yemen. Yemen used to be, and still is, a very tribal society. And in the time of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, all of that area was covered by armed tribes who had constant wars between themselves, and they were in rivalry, and it was insecure. When Islām entered into Yemen during the time of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, Islām made the whole area peaceful. Subhān'Allāh, now when people are getting away from Islām and we are missing the Islāmic rule, that same area between Sana'ā' and Hadramaut today is one of the most insecure areas in Yemen, and if someone wants to travel through a particular route that will go through the tribal areas between Sana'ā' and Hadramaut, forget about travelling if you are not armed. So Subhān'Allāh, it is very interesting that Rasūlullāh ﷺ chose this area which is now one of the more insecure areas in the world as a reference, to say that you cannot have peace without Islām. And this leads to the fifth lesson:

There is no Comprehensive Peace unless Islām Reigns

There is no comprehensive peace unless Islām reigns. Under Islām, people will have true peace, and that is the meaning of the word Islām; peace.

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Rasūlullāh's ﷺ Response to 'Utbah Bin Rabī'ah

Another example that could reveal to us how Rasūlullāh ﷺ used to deal with these situations of the people of Quraish [is when] the people of Quraish met together and said, "Let us find somebody who is the most expert in poetry and magic to go and meet Muhammad ﷺ and tell us how to deal with him." So they decided they are going to send 'Utbah Bin Rabī'ah, who was supposedly an expert in these areas. 'Utbah Bin Rabī'ah went to Muhammad ﷺ and said, "Tell me O Muhammad, who is better, you or 'Abdul Muttalib?" These questions are a set up. In the society of Arabia, they had so much respect and glorification for their ancestry, and the family of Rasūlullāh ﷺ was a lineage of nobility, so these [people] were held in very high esteem, not only among the family of Rasūlullāh ﷺ but among everyone in Makkah. Qusaÿ Bin Kilāb, Hāshim, 'Abdul Muttalib; these were people who were glorified. And forget about speaking against any one of them, you just cannot do that, it was not allowed, unaccepted, not tolerated. So 'Utbah, who was not a descendant of Banū Hāshim, is asking Muhammad ﷺ, "What do you say about your father 'Abdullāh, tell us, what is your opinion about him? What do you say about your grandfather 'Abdul Muttalib?" These were setup questions. He asked him about 'Abdullāh, [and] Rasūlullāh ﷺ remained silent, he did not answer. He asked him about 'Abdul Muttalib, Rasūlullāh ﷺ did not respond. So 'Utbah said, "If you claim those men to be better than you, the fact is they worshipped the gods you have criticised. If you claim to be better than them, then speak, so we can hear what you say. By God, we have never seen any fool more harmful to his people than you. You have caused division and dissension among us, criticised our religion, and so disgraced us in the eyes of the Arabs that the rumour is current among them that there is a magician or a sorcerer amidst Quraish." Now, 'Utbah is blaming Muhammad ﷺ for this rumour that there is a sorcerer in Quraish. Who founded this rumour to start with? Who was the one who went around telling the people that there is a sorcerer among us? Is it not the leaders of

Quraish and among them ‘Utbah? And now he is blaming Muhammad ﷺ for it because it affected them and it was an embarrassment for them. They are the ones who told the Arabs that he is a sorcerer and now it is an embarrassment for them; everyone among the other tribes are speaking about this sorcerer among Quraish. And then he said, “By God fellow, it seems all we have to await is the cry of a pregnant woman for us all to be at one another with swords till we wipe ourselves out.” What he meant by this, that we are waiting for the cry of a pregnant woman, is that in a very short time we might be fighting each other in Quraish because of what you have brought, you have caused disunity among us, we are about to jump at each others throats. And then he offered him similar offers; what do you want, status or wealth? Whatever you want we will give it to you, just tell us so that we could bring an end to this. Rasūlullāh ﷺ allowed ‘Utbah to go on with this nonsense without interrupting him, Rasūlullāh ﷺ was a very good listener. Even though all of this was stuff that did not make any sense, Rasūlullāh ﷺ was calmly listening. And when ‘Utbah finished, Rasūlullāh ﷺ asked him, “O ‘Utbah, are you done?” *Very* kindly; “Are you done?” He said, “Yes.” Rasūlullāh ﷺ did not respond to what he was saying with his own words, but he started reciting Āyāt from Sūrah Fussilat:

In the name of God, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful.

Hā Meem. [This is] a Revelation from the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful. A Book whose verses have been detailed, an Arabic Qur'ān for a people who know.[70]

And he went on, going on and on, it was about a page; quite a few Āyāt. And he kept on reciting until until he reached to a verse that states:

But if they turn away, then say, "I have warned you of a thunderbolt like the thunderbolt [that struck] ‘Ād and Thamūd."[71]

In one narration it says that when Rasūlullāh ﷺ mentioned this Āyah, ‘Utbah placed his hand over the mouth of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and urged him to stop, because this Āyah is threatening them with punishment, and ‘Utbah knew deep in his heart that Muhammad ﷺ is truthful, he never said anything that did not come to happen, and if he is threatening us with punishment [then] it might come to happen, so I need to stop him, and he said, “I ask you in the name of the relationship between us to stop.” In this other narration it states that ‘Utbah went

back to the people and they asked him what happened, he said, "He recited to me Qurān and I did not understand anything he was saying except that he threatened us with a punishment like the punishment of ʻĀd and Thamūd." They told him, "Woe to you! He is speaking to you in Arabic and you do not understand him?!" He said, "In the name of Allāh, I did not understand what he was talking about." Well, the same Āyāt say that some people have a seal over their hearts; they will not understand it. The lesson to learn from this is that Rasūlullāh ﷺ dealt with different situations in different ways, and many times he would use Qurān to respond to what they were saying. So let us use Qurān, let us use the concepts of Qurān, in our Da'wah. What is better to use than the Words of Allāh ﷻ?

Dimād Al-Azdī

I will talk about the story of Dimād. Dimād Al-Azdī was a man from Azjanuwa from Southern Arabia. He came into Makkah and he heard some of the people in Makkah saying that there is a man among us who is possessed with Jinn – they were referring to Muhammad ﷺ. Dimād Al-Azdī used to be a man who would heal people who were possessed by demons, so with the right intentions, Dimād Al-Azdī went to Rasūlullāh ﷺ to offer his help. He did not mean anything bad, he [had] never met Rasūlullāh ﷺ, he did not know him, [but] since he was an expert healer, he went to Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "I heard that you are possessed by Jinns and I am offering my service. If you want I can help you." Which is quite an insulting statement, but Rasūlullāh ﷺ was a very compassionate [man] and he understood that this man must have heard some wrong information, so Rasūlullāh ﷺ started by mentioning the words of *Khutbatul Hājah*:

Innal Hamda Lillāh. Nahmaduhū Wa Nastaʻīnuhū Wa Nastaghfiruhū Wa Nastahdī. Wa Naʻūdhu Billāhi Min Shurūri Anfusinā Wa Min Sayyi'āti A'mālinā. May-Yahdihillāhu Fa-Lā Mudillalah, Wa May-Yudlil Fa-Lā Hādiya Lah. Wa Ash'hadu Al-Lā Ilāha Illallāhu Wahdahū Lā Sharīka Lāh.

These are the words Rasūlullāh ﷺ would usually start with in order to open his speech, as an opening of his speech. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ just started with these words, let me translate them:

[Verily] all praise is for Allāh, we praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allāh from the evil of our own souls [and from our bad deeds]. Whomsoever Allāh guides will never be led astray, and whomsoever Allāh leaves astray, no one can guide. I bear witness that there is no god but Allāh, alone and without any partner.

These words in Arabic obviously have a rhyme to them and are quite eloquent; you lose that in translation. But anyway, Dimād interrupted Rasūlullāh ﷺ, he stopped him and he said, "O Muhammad, can you please repeat those words again?" Rasūlullāh ﷺ repeated them again. Dimād said, "I have never heard something like this. These words are so wonderful, they are going to reach the depths of the ocean." Meaning these words are going to have influence. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "Then pledge allegiance to me – *Umdud Yadaka 'Ubāya'ak."* Become a Muslim. He immediately extended his hand and said, "Ash'hadu Al-Lā Ilāha Illallāh, Wa Ash'hadu Anna Muhammad Ar-Rasūlullāh." Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "How about you also pledge for your people, your tribe?" He said, "And I will pledge for my people." Subhān'Allāh, here you have a man, coming with one objective; meeting Rasūlullāh ﷺ for a few minutes, [and then] leaving as a Muslim. He came to heal Rasūlullāh ﷺ, Rasūlullāh ﷺ healed him. He went and left after this short meeting as a Muslim; that was the personality that Rasūlullāh ﷺ had. He had such a presence, such an influence on people that within a short meeting it completely changes their lives. This was a life-changing event for Dimād, becoming a Muslim, it occurred within one meeting. And this is a leadership quality that Allāh ﷻ has given Muhammad ﷺ, he had this ability to influence others. Subhān'Allāh, years later, Rasūlullāh ﷺ sent an army that passed next to the village of Dimād. The leader of the army asked them, "Did you take anything from these people?" So one soldier in the army said, "Yes, I have taken away from them a strong camel." The leader of the army said, "Give it back because these are the people of Dimād, and Rasūlullāh ﷺ has given them protection. Give them back what belongs to them."

'Amr Ibn 'Absah

Another story is of a man called 'Amr Ibn 'Absah. 'Amr Ibn 'Absah was a man from Arabia, he was not from Makkah. 'Amr Bin 'Absah speaks about himself, he mentions a story, it is in Sahīh Al-Muslim. He says: "In the time of

Jāhiliyyah, in the time of Ignorance, I had belief in my heart that the religion of my people is false, and I had no trust or belief in worshipping idols, I knew deep in my heart that this is wrong. And then one day I came to know that there is a man in Makkah preaching a new religion, so I immediately went on my camel to meet him. So I came in and *Fa-Talaqqaftu* – I had to sneak in and secretly meet him." That was how difficult the conditions were in Makkah that a person from outside Makkah could not meet Muhammad ﷺ publicly, you cannot even meet him. He said, "Fa-Talaqqaftu – I had to do it secretly. And then I came to meet Rasūlullāh ﷺ, I asked him, 'What are you?' He said, 'I am a Prophet.' I asked, 'What does that mean?' He said, 'I was sent by Allāh.' 'What did He send you with?'" And you can notice the simplicity of the Bedouin, their mind is not complicated with philosophy and arguments; very simple – What are you? I am a Prophet. What does that mean? It means that I was sent by Allāh. So ['Amr continued], "What did He send you with?" He said, "He sent me with a Message of worshipping Him alone, associating no gods with Him, and to destroy idols." He asked, "Can I follow you?" Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "You cannot follow me now, do you not see my situation? But go back to your people, and when you hear that I prevail, then come and see me." Rasūlullāh ﷺ knew that he will prevail one day, he said that when you hear that I have prevailed, come and meet me. So 'Amr Ibn Al-'Absah said, "I left, and I would constantly ask about news, anything that relates to Muhammad ﷺ. I would always ask the travellers, 'What is happening with Muhammad ﷺ?' Until one day I heard that Muhammad ﷺ has migrated to Madīnah and he has been victorious, so I went to meet him in Madīnah. I approached Rasūlullāh ﷺ and I asked him, 'Do you know me?'" This meeting now is years after he met with Rasūlullāh ﷺ, and he only met with Rasūlullāh ﷺ for a very short time. So he went to Rasūlullāh ﷺ and asked, "Do you know who I am?" Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "Yes, you are the man who came and met me in Makkah." And see, that is another leadership quality; you know your followers, you remember them, you remember their names, you know about them. Sayyidinā Sulaimān ﷺ was inspecting the army, and his army was composed of humans, Jinn, birds, so it was not only restricted to one form of life; he had humans, Jinn, his air-force was birds. And he noticed the absence of one soldier, Al-Hudhud; one soldier was absent, and only Allāh knows the number of his army, but he noticed the absence, and he asked, "Where is Hudhud?" So Rasūlullāh ﷺ remembered 'Amr Bin 'Absah years after he met

him and he said, “Yes, you are the man who came and met me in Makkah.” ‘Amr Bin ‘Absah said, “O Messenger of Allāh, teach me of that knowledge which Allāh has taught you. Tell me about Salāh.” Rasūlullāh ﷺ described how to pray. And then he said, “Teach me about Wudū',” and Rasūlullāh ﷺ taught him about Wudū'.

10

The Early Immigrants

Abū Dharr ﷺ

Abū Dharr ﷺ Leaves Ghifār because of the Corruption

We covered the story of the Islām of Dimād and ‘Amr Bin ‘Absah, we move on to the story of Abū Dharr ﷺ. I am going to mention to you the Imām Ahmad version. Abū Dharr ﷺ stated, “Me, my brother and my mother left our land of Ghifār because our people used to be disrespectful of the *Ash'hur Al-Hurum*.” Al-Ash'hur Al-Hurum are four months which the Arabs used to consider sacred and this would give them a break from warfare. So they would not allow killing [or] war during those four months, and it was a firm tradition among them that you do not break the sanctity of these four months. The people of Ghifār were different, these were professional raiders of caravans,

they did not really care about Ash'hur Al-Hurum and all of this stuff, they were Bedouins who would raid caravans, steal, kill, corrupt, and they did not follow any rules or customs; these were the people of Ghifār. And they had a bad reputation in Arabia; people in Arabia knew Ghifār, these people do not abide by any rules, [are] violent, [etc]. Abū Dharr ﷺ, before Islām, disagreed with this style of life, so he, his brother and mother decided to leave Ghifār, just go out. So they went and they visited an uncle of theirs, he used to be a member of a different tribe, and they stayed with him, and Abū Dharr says, "He was very generous and hospitable to us – very kind. But his relatives were becoming very jealous; how come he is treating us so well?" So what they did was they went up to the uncle of Abū Dharr and they told him, "When you are absent, Āna Unais – Abū Dharr's brother – goes and visits your wife and he is interested in her." The uncle, quite naively, went to Abū Dharr and Unais and mentioned to them what he heard, he said, "People are saying that Unais is interested in my wife." Abū Dharr was very angry and upset – this was false – he was very angry and he said, "All the good that you have done to us, you have cancelled it. All of your hospitality, your kindness, is gone after this accusation of yours." And they immediately packed up and left. Abū Dharr said, "My uncle was quite sorry and regretful for what he had done and he wrapped up himself in a cloth and was crying. But we were so angry, we just left." And now they settled in a place close to Makkah.

Abū Dharr Receives News of the Arrival of a New Prophet and goes to Investigate

Abū Dharr says, "My brother Unais went to do some business in Makkah and he met a man who claimed to be a Prophet." He met Muhammad ﷺ. So Unais came back and he said, "I found a man who is preaching a new religion, worshipping Allāh alone." Abū Dharr said, "And at that time, I had already worshipped Allāh for three years and revoked all of the worshipping of idols; I renounced it." Subhān'Allāh, you see these people, their *Fitrah* guides them and tells them that this is wrong, this is false. Abū Dharr says, "I had been praying to Allāh for three years." So Abū Dharr was asked, "How were you praying to Allāh?" He said, "I would pray to whichever direction Allāh would point me to, and I would pray in whatever way Allāh would guide me to, and I would pray at night until I fell asleep, and only the sun would wake me up in the morning." So he would

pray; he does not know how to pray but he would pray to Allāh ﷻ, for three years. Abū Dharr asked his brother Unais, "What does he teach?" So Unais mentioned some of the teachings of Islām that he learnt from Rasūlullāh ﷺ, and then he asked, "What are the people saying about him?" Unais said, "They are claiming that he is a sorcerer, a magician, a liar," and he went down the list. Abū Dharr said, "*Mā Ashfaita Ghalīlī* – You have not satisfied my hunger, I want to go and investigate the matter myself." What the people say might not necessarily be right; the media of Makkah, the CNN of the day or the ABC or whatever you call it, had all of these labels that they would brand Rasūlullāh ﷺ with, but Abū Dharr did not have trust in what the people are saying, he would have to go and meet Rasūlullāh ﷺ and hear it from the Messenger himself, and that is what a Muslim is required to do; *Tabayyanū*. Allāh ﷻ says when you receive some information, verify it; Tabayyanū. And this is where our scholars learnt the science of Hadīth; they would verify it. It is just not enough to hear a Hadīth narrated from someone. The scholars used to say, "*Hātū Rijālakum,"* or "*Sammū Lanā Rijālakum.*" Whenever they would hear a Hadīth they would say "Mention the names of your men." Where did you hear this from? Tell us the names, we want to know who you got this information from, we do not just follow any hearsay.

The People of Quraish Beat Up Abū Dharr

Abū Dharr said, "I went into Makkah and I asked the first man I saw in front of me, 'Can you please guide me towards Muhammad?'" He said, "That man immediately started calling the men of Quraish and they started pelting me with stones, rocks, whatever they could get their hands on, until I fell unconscious. By the time I woke up, I was like *Nusub Ahmar*." Nusub Ahmar – the people of Quraish used to have these stones [or] idols which they would slaughter and sacrifice their animals over, so they would be soaked with blood. That is the description Abū Dharr gave of himself; like a red pole, soaked with blood from head to toe. He said, "So I went to the well of Zamzam, I drank water and I washed the blood off my body, and then I went next to Al-Ka'bah." In the narration of Imām Ahmad it says that he stayed there for thirty days, not knowing where to meet Rasūlullāh ﷺ. And Abū Dharr said, "I did not have any food for the entire period except for drinking the water of Zamzam." Now, I think physicians can tell us that a person can survive by drinking water for quite

a while, so maybe that is not such a surprise, but the surprising thing is what comes next. Abū Dharr said, "And I started picking up weight until I was getting folds on my stomach." You know, for them, the Bedouins, they would have flat tummies, they were very fit, [but] Abū Dharr said, "I was gaining weight, and now the flesh in my stomach was folding." You know [how] when you sit down and the flesh on the stomach folds?

Abū Dharr's Intense Hatred of Idol Worshipping

Abū Dharr states that he then saw two women making Tawāf and they would touch *Isāf* and *Nā'ilah* on every turn. What is the story of Isāf and Nā'ilah? Isāf and Nā'ilah are a man and a woman who were in love and they could not get married, and they had an appointment, a date, to meet next to Al-Ka'bah, and they intended to fornicate next to the House of Allāh. Allāh ﷻ turned them into stones on the spot. After the passage of some time, the Mushrikīn of Quraish started worshipping them, [they] started worshipping these two stones, Isāf and Nā'ilah. This shows you how when you open the floodgate for Shaitān, you cannot close it, he just throws you in dungeons of darkness, you can never get out of it, it is a spiral; if you get in, you never come out, darkness over darkness, one veil after another. The story of idol worshipping actually started as erecting statues after righteous men died. Shaitān came to the people of Nūh and told them, "After the righteous men have passed away, why do you not erect statues of these righteous men so that they would remind you about Allāh?" He came to teach them good, he said they would remind you about Allāh ﷻ, so they did that, and then after a few generations he started telling them, "Worship them." That is how the idol worshipping grew. So here you have Isāf and Nā'ilah being worshipped, and these two women would make Tawāf and they would touch Isāf and Nā'ilah on every turn. Now, Abū Dharr despised idol worshipping, so he threw out a comment, he said, "Why do you not make one of them have intercourse with the other?" Either the women did not understand what he said or they did not believe what they heard, [so] they continued. When Abū Dharr saw that his words did not deter them, he threw out an even cruder comment, and I am not going to mention it! Now the women were sure of what they heard, they immediately just started running and screaming, wailing down the streets of Makkah, and who did they run into? Muhammad ﷺ and Abū Bakr. Muhammad ﷺ and Abū Bakr are seing these two women running in the streets

screaming. [They asked,] "What is wrong with you?" They said, "That heretic over there!" Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "What is the matter with him?" They said, "He spoke a word that fills the mouth – *Tamla'ul Fam*." In other words, something that is unspeakable; very bad words.

Abū Dharr Meets Rasūlullāh ﷺ and Accepts Islām and Proudly Publicises It

Rasūlullāh ﷺ and Abū Bakr went to meet this man, Abū Dharr, and they started a conversation. Rasūlullāh ﷺ asked Abū Dharr, "Where are you from? – *Min Aynar-Rajul?"* He replied, "*Ana Min Ghifār* – I am from Ghifār." Rasūlullāh ﷺ placed his hand on his forehead. Abū Dharr said, "Rasūlullāh ﷺ was surprised and amazed to see someone from Ghifār coming to Makkah in search of the truth." From Ghifār?! These people who raid caravans? The ones who do not follow any rules or any customs? And he is searching for truth in Makkah and the people of Makkah, the ones who are considered to be the religious authority of Arabia, are rejecting my Message. Abū Dharr said, "I felt that he might have disliked that I mentioned that I am from Ghifār, so I extended my hand to pull his hand from his forehead." Abū Dharr said, "Abū Bakr slammed my hand and told me, 'Put your hand down.'" Then the conversation continued and Abū Dharr ended up embracing Islām.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ told Abū Dharr ؓ, "*Uktum Īmān* – Keep your Īmān secret." Abū Dharr went out the next day, and rather than keeping his Īmān secret, he went in front of the people of Quraish and said, "Ash'hadu Al-Lā Ilāha Illallāh, Wa Ash'hadu Anna Muhammad Ar-Rasūlullāh." He did not care about the consequences. He said, "They gathered around me and they beat me up so bad, I was going to die, until Al-'Abbās Bin 'Abdul Muttalib came in and said, 'Do you know where this man is from?'" Just one question. "He is from Ghifār." Abū Dharr said, "Immediately, they just ran away." All what you would see is them fleeing, running away from him. But he did the same thing the next day, and he did the same thing the third day, and every day the same thing would happen; they would come and beat him up until Al-'Abbās comes and tells this new group of people who are hitting him that the man is from Ghifār. Al-'Abbās said, "And you know, if this man gets killed by you, that none of your trade will make it safely to Syria," they are going to take revenge of you.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ Sends Abū Dharr to his People to Convey the Message

Rasūlullāh ﷺ then told Abū Dharr, "Go back to your people and convey the Message to them, and when you hear that I prevail, come to me." How long did Abū Dharr stay with Rasūlullāh ﷺ? Quite a short time. How much did he learn from him? Probably not a lot; a few verses, a few Ahādīth here and there, and that was it. Abū Dharr went back to his people, Ghifār, and he started giving them Da'wah. Slowly and slowly, people were accepting Islām among the people of Ghifār. He said, "By the time Rasūlullāh ﷺ made Hijrah, almost half of my tribe were Muslim," – [from] the whole tribe of Ghifār. He said, "And then we decided to go and visit Rasūlullāh ﷺ and the rest of the tribe had said, 'When Rasūlullāh ﷺ arrives and when we go and meet him, we will become Muslim.'" So now the whole tribe is Muslim; all of them are Muslim. The other half just said we are going to wait, it is a matter of time and then we will become Muslim, and they did. One day when Rasūlullāh ﷺ was in Madīnah, they see in the horizon this dust cloud; sign of an army approaching, a large group of people. So some of the Sahābah rushed to their weapons thinking that maybe an army is approaching us, but Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "*Kun Abā Dharr* – Be Abū Dharr," and the prophecy of Rasūlullāh ﷺ was true, it was Abū Dharr and all of his tribe of Ghifār coming to pledge their allegiance to Rasūlullāh ﷺ – the entire tribe.

Now, there was rivalry between two tribes; Ghifār and Aslam. When Aslam heard that Ghifār became Muslim and they went and pledged allegiance to Rasūlullāh ﷺ, they immediately went to Rasūlullāh ﷺ and said, "We also want to become Muslim." Two tribes! Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "*Ghifār; Ghafarullāhu Lahā, Wa Aslam; Salamahullāh* – Ghifār; may Allāh forgive them, and Aslam; may Allāh give them peace." All of it started by the work of one man. And how much did this man know? Was he a scholar at the time? No, he just knew a few Āyāt, it was later on that Abū Dharr came to learn a lot, but at that stage, he just spent a few days with Rasūlullāh ﷺ and that was it, all of Ghifār became Muslim. The last people in the desert who you would expect to accept Islām, they did become Muslim.

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Lessons from the Story of Abū Dharr ﷺ

What can we learn from the story of Abū Dharr?

Allāh Gives Guidance to Those who Search for it

Number One: Again, the same lesson is coming up: **And those who are guided - He increases them in guidance.**[72] The ones who search for guidance, Allāh will give it to them. Abū Dharr investigated the matter and Allāh showed him the light, showed him the truth.

Share Knowledge No Matter How Small

Number Two: Rasūlullāh ﷺ says, "*Ballighū 'Annī Walaw Āyah* – Convey even one verse from me." Whatever you have, convey it, share it, teach it; do not keep it to yourself.

Be Courageous

Number Three: Courage. Abū Dharr is an example of a person who has courage. He was not intimidated by the fact that he was a foreigner in Makkah; he stood and he said I am a Muslim, and he was proud, and he paid for it dearly. And then he went to his people and he preached the Message to them. So this shows you the courage of the personality of Abū Dharr which is shown again and again and again by the Sahābah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, and this reveals to us the inherent qualities that they had. And this is also one of the reasons why Allāh ﷻ chose them to be the bearers of the Message, because they had simplicity, and they had courage, and they had honesty, and they had commitment to a cause; when they believe in something they commit their lives to it.

Verify the Truth

Number Four: Verifying the truth. Just because the people say that he is a sorcerer, a liar, a magician, [this] does not mean anything; you have to go to the source and verify the information yourself. Allāh has given you a mind, Allāh has given you intelligence; use it, do not just follow what the people are saying. Rasūlullāh ﷺ says, "Do not be an Imma'ah." When he was asked for the meaning of *Imma'ah*, he said, "Whenever the people say yes you say yes, and whenever they say no you say no." Do not just follow.

Everything Good is Significant

Number Five: *Lā Tahqiranna Minal Ma'rūfi Shai'an Walaw An Talqa Akhāka Bi-Wajhil Hasan*. Rasūlullāh ﷺ says in a Hadīth, "Do no belittle any good deed, even if it is as small as smiling in the face of your brother." Do not belittle anything. Whatever good there is, do not consider it to be insignificant, because everything good is significant, and maybe that small thing will make a difference on the Day of Judgment for you and it will be the criteria between Hellfire and Paradise. Maybe one small deed that you would do, which you do not pay any attention to, would tilt the scale to your side in your favour. And how do we deduct this lesson from the story of Abū Dharr? Abū Dharr ﷺ learnt very little, and all what he went and did was propagate the Message, and maybe he never expected that this small effort of his would end up causing the whole tribe of Ghifār and the whole tribe of Aslam to become Muslim! Maybe he only felt that he could convince a few group of people, maybe a few of his relatives, but for this work to end up bearing the fruits of two major tribes becoming Muslim, maybe Abū Dharr never thought about that. But you throw the seed, and Allāh ﷻ will make it grow. And I will mention to you some contemporary examples about how sometimes you would do something very small, and you never pay attention to it, but it will make a big difference. And there is a Hadīth by the way that says, "A person might speak a word that would please Allāh, and they do not pay attention to it, but Allāh ﷻ will raise them up levels because of that. And a person might speak a word that will anger Allāh, and because of that they will be thrown in Hellfire." It is a matter of a word here or there.

Embraced Islām through Drug Dealer

There is a brother from Canada, he said that he started having an interest in learning religion at a very early age; around the age of nine he started studying religion – that is quite early. He said but he was turned away from Islām because of a lesson that he was taught in school about Islām; he was shown some images that turned him away from Islām. And then he said he was going through some problems in his family; his father left and his mother was on drugs, so he said he completely forgot about this issue of religion, even though he had some early interest in it. He said then he became a drug user, and then he was promoted to being a drug dealer, and he went to jail at the age of 14, so

he had a turbulent life. He said, “Later on, towards my later teenage years, after I came out of jail, I used to go to this park in Canada in the centre of the city, and that is where the drug addicts would usually congregate, and we would all smoke and use our drugs and you would find needles all over; that is where we would all come together and get high. So I went there and I was sitting next to this guy who looked foreign, and I was smoking my dope and I saw something interesting; the way that this guy next to me used to wrap his marijuana (or hashīsh or whatever it was! I am not very familiar with their specific terms), the way he used to wrap it was different. So that caught my eye [and] I asked him, ‘I see that the way you wrap your hashīsh or hash is different, where are you from?’” He said, “I am from Morocco.” He said, “So you must be a Muslim?” He said, “Yes, I am a Muslim.” He said, “Can you tell me something about Islām?” Now he is remembering his early years of studying about religion. He said, “Tell me about Islām.” He said, “So this Moroccan guy was going through the tenets of Islām and we were all smoking and we were very high! He was speaking and I am just receiving all of that information and absorbing it; we were both high! He is speaking very well and I am understanding very well!” He said, “For two hours continuously, we were talking about Islām, until we ran out of drugs, we had nothing left. And then we continued the conversation for another two hours; four hours in total.” And he said, “Allāh ﷻ sent another person to sit next to us.” Subhān'Allāh, this was Qadr of Allāh. An Algerian person who was not on drugs or anything, he was just there, he happened to be there. He said, “He sent him to us to correct whatever mistakes that that person would make.” You know, people have different understanding of Islām, so they would correct each other, and whenever one of them would mention something wrong, the other person would correct the false information. He said, “We continued the conversation for four hours. After that, I became Muslim.” He said, “Now, neither did the Algerian or Moroccan person know that I became Muslim, because I left and then became Muslim on my own, and I stopped using drugs.” And I actually met him and he was doing Da’wah at the time. When he was telling us his story, there was a group of us, so one of the brothers who was sitting and hearing this story said a bad word about that Moroccan person, because of [him] using drugs. This Canadian Muslim brother, his face turned red, and he became very upset and angry, and he said, “Don’t speak about him! Because I

became Muslim through him, and every single thing that I do – my Salāh, my Siyām, my Zakāh, my Dhikr – every single thing that I do, a copy of it will be deposited to his account."

Now, only Allāh knows where that person is, he might still be in the park using drugs, he might be lost, and he never knows that in his account is Salāh and Siyām and Zakāh; they are all deposited and he has no idea about it. He will come on the Day of Judgement and see all of this and not know where it came from. I was in those parks using drugs, where did all of these good deeds come from? It all happened because of a few words that he said to a drug addict like himself. Now, maybe he never knew that this person would become a Muslim, maybe he never intended it, he just was conversing, talking, but he threw something good out there and these are the fruits of it. So never belittle anything. Maybe there is a small thing that you would do here and there and this would be the cause of your salvation on the Day of Judgement, while the big things that you are doing, the big projects, the things that you are spending a lot of time on, would not bare such a harvest, and this is something that is in the Hands of Allāh, so you never know. Therefore you should do whatever good you can, and leave it out there; just throw the seeds and Allāh ﷻ will make them grow. But do not belittle anything, *Walaw An Talqa Akhāka Bi-Wajhil Hasan* – even if it is as much as smiling in the face of your brother.

Embraced Islām through Handouts of Qurān at University

There is one more story I would mention to you to illustrate the same point further, and both stories were narrated to me by the persons themselves. This was an African American who was a student at University of California in Berkeley, and he heard about Islām but he did not know much about it. African Americans tend to know about Islām because they would have relatives who are Muslim or they would have a mosque next to them, and there is a very old tradition of Islām among African Americans in America, so you would usually find that they would have one member of their family or one friend who embraced Islām or is a Muslim, so in general they are more familiar than anybody else in America about Islām. So he knew about Islām but he did not know the details about it, he was not very interested in it. He said, "One day, in the beginning of the semester, I was walking through campus and a member of the Muslim Student Association was handing out translations of Qurān, so I

picked up a copy. And on my way home, on the bus, I had nothing to do, so I opened up this Book that was given to me as a gift. I had no idea what it was, and I opened up the first page which is Al-Fatihah. I thought that this is an introduction to the Book, and who reads introductions? So I flipped the page and I went straight to the body of the Book." Now, the first thing that he would see next is Sūrah Al-Baqarah. He said, "I began reading: ***Alif Lām Meem. Dhālikal Kitābu Lā Raiba Fīh*** **– This is the book about which there is no doubt.** There is is no doubts in this Book, no doubts in this Book!" He said, "I was shocked by that statement. Usually when an author would write a book, they would start by apologising for their mistakes, apologising for their shortcomings, and here you have an Author who is so confident about Himself, He is stating that there is no doubt in My Book, and that is the first thing that you see in front of your eyes! So I was quite amazed and I wanted to know who is the Author of this Book. I flipped to the front cover; did not see any name, looked at the back; did not see any name, I didn't know who wrote this Book. And I kept on reading and then eventually I realised that this wasn't written by a man, this came straight from Allāh ﷻ." He said, "The power and the confidence that faces you as soon as you open the Book made my heart shake, and that was the reason why I became Muslim, just that verse **– This is the book about which there is no doubt.**"

Now again, that person who was giving out Qurāns might be thinking well nobody is going to read this, I'm just wasting my time, I'll just do it because they asked me to; because of that Qurān, this brother became Muslim, and he is an Imām, and he is very active in Da'wah, and many people became Muslim through him. And that was a product of a very small effort.

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Hijrah to Abyssinia

Two Migrations to Al-Habashah

We move on to Al-Hijrah to Al-Habashah. There were two migrations that happened to Al-Habashah; the first one happened in the fifth year of *Bi'thah* – following Revelation, and it was composed of a small group; twelve men and four women. The second Hijrah – migration, was of a larger group and it was

composed of eighty three men and eighteen or nineteen women, and this was more of a sporadic migration, maybe they did not go in one group. Now, how come there are two migrations to Al-Habashah? When the first group went to Al-Habashah, they heard a rumour that the people of Quraish had become Muslim. Rasūlullāh ﷺ received the Āyāt of Sūrah An-Najm and he recited those Āyāt, and those Āyāt were so powerful and it had so much effect on the people of Quraish [that] when they heard the last Āyah which is an Āyah of Sujūd, and Rasūlullāh ﷺ and the Muslims made Sujūd, the Kuffār made Sujūd with them. They were so in tune with the Āyāt, they made Sujūd with the Muslims, and this was the origin of that false rumour that the people of Quraish became Muslim. So you had a group of the ones who made Hijrah come back to Makkah to find out it was a false rumour, so now you had another Hijrah which was a larger group.

Quraish Pursue Muslims Even in Abyssinia

When Rasūlullāh ﷺ saw the pain and suffering that his Companions were going through, he said, "Why do you not go to Al-Habashah, because therein is a King who does not oppress anyone. *Lā Yuzlam 'Indahū Ahad* – the King is just and he does not oppress anyone." So they went to Al-Habashah, and the first to leave were 'Uthmān Ibn 'Affān and his wife, the daughter of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. There is a narration that says that 'Uthmān Ibn 'Affān and his wife are the first to make Hijrah in the sake of Allāh after Lūt. They went to Al-Habashah and the second group came, so they left Makkah. Does that mean that the people of Quraish would leave them alone? No. Even though the Muslims in Abyssinia were no threat to Makkah politically, they were no threat to the economical interests of Makkah, nevertheless the people of Quraish did not want to leave the Muslims alone. In other words, even if we are left alone, we are not going to leave you alone, we are going to stay after you until we destroy your religion. So the people of Quraish assembled a delegation to go and meet with An-Najāshī to ask him to turn over the Muslims, and who did they choose for this mission? 'Amr Ibn Al-'Aas, and 'Abdullāh Ibn Rabī'ah in one narration and 'Āmir Bin Rabī'ah in another narration, but the central figure here is 'Amr Ibn Al-'Aas.

Amr Ibn Al-'Aas was a diplomat, was a very intelligent man of Quraish, he had wide connections, he was a friend of the kings of the world at that time, so he was the right person to choose. And he was a mastermind in plotting and

planning, and you can see that he was very good in conspiracies against the Muslims. That was the personality of ‘Amr Ibn Al-‘Aas before Islām. ‘Amr Ibn Al-‘Aas went to An-Najāshī, and the plan was that he was going to go and meet the top officials first, and he ws going to give every one of them gifts, or in other words, bribes. And he was going to present to them his case and say that in your land are some fools who ran away from Makkah, we want you to turn them over. So he wants to work it out with all of the top officials before he meets with An-Najāshī, so when he talks to An-Najāshī and he consults his officials, they will all give him a unified opinion that you should hand them over. So he went to every one of them, had a meeting with every one of them, and gave them gifts, and then he went to meet An-Najāshī. And he had [already] told the officials, “I prefer that you hand us over these people without having them meet An-Najāshī.” I do not want them to meet An-Najāshī because their words are very effective; they feared Qurān.

‘Amr Ibn Al-‘Aas Asks An-Najāshī to Hand Over Muslims

So he worked out the plan and he went to meet An-Najāshī, and he told An-Najāshī, “There are some fools among them who came to your land, we know them and they left our religion and they did not follow yours,” and he went on and on and on, in the end he said, “We want you to hand them over to us.” Now, all of the officials were already there and they said, “Yes, hand them over!” An-Najāshī said, “No, I will not hand over people who sought refuge in my land until I hear their side of the story.” See the justice that An-Najāshī had, and the choice of Rasūlullāh ﷺ to have his Sahābah go to the right place. So An-Najāshī called the Muslims to come and meet him.

Ja’far Ibn Abī Tālib Eloquently Presents their Case to An-Najāshī

The Muslims received a message, they were told that ‘Amr Ibn Al-‘Aas has met with An-Najāshī and An-Najāshī wants to meet you. So they had a *Shūrā* – advice, and Ja’far Ibn Abī Tālib was to be their spokesman, the only spokesman, and that they are going to speak the truth. They went in to meet An-Najāshī, An-Najāshī asked them, “What religion are you following? You left the religion of your people, you did not join my religion, you did not join any of the religions of the world, who are you?” There is a Hadīth narrated by Umm Salamah ﷺ, it narrates the speech that Ja’far Ibn Abī Tālib gave in front of An-Najāshī, and I

want to read the exact words of Ja'far because there is a lot to learn from this presentation. Ja'far said – and Ja'far is the cousin of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, he is the brother of 'Alï Ibn Abī Tālib – he said,

"O King! We were a people of Polytheism; we worshipped idols, ate the meat of animals that had died, offended rules of hospitality and permitted things forbidden, as in the shedding of one another's blood and so on. We completely ignored matters of right and wrong."

So notice the opening of the speech is talking about their background. I want you to follow the speech and look at how Ja'far Ibn Abī Tālib arranges speech. Keep in mind that he is talking to someone who has no background whatsoever about Islām; he does not know anything about it, he is speaking to someone who is Christian, and he is speaking to a King. So he gave him background information of who we used to be, this was our situation; we were people of Shirk who used to worship idols, we used to eat the meat of dead animals, we offended rules of hospitality and permitted things forbidden, we used to shed each others blood, we completely ignored matters of right and wrong. So he gave him an impression that we used to live in a chaotic stage. And then he said,

"And so God sent to us a Prophet from among ourselves whose honesty and trustworthiness we knew well."

With this statement he has established credibility in the Prophet. So now An-Najāshī knows that Muhammad ﷺ is from among the people, his people know him very well, they know his trustworthiness, and they know his truth.

"He summoned us to pray to God alone and without associates, told us to respect rights of kinship, to honour rights of hospitality, to pray to God the Almighty and Glorious, to fast for Him, and to worship none other than Him."

Here he gave him issues of *Tawhīd* – Oneness of Allāh, and also the morals that Islām teaches; he gave him a little bit of both. And he said,

"And so he called us to God, to affirm His oneness, to worship Him, and to tear down all the other stones and idols [that] we and our forefathers had worshipped apart from Him. He ordered us to be truthful in our speech, to keep to our trust, to respect kinship ties and hospitality rights,

and to abandon things forbidden, and the shedding of blood. He forbade us to do anything immoral; to tell lies, to misuse the funds of orphans, or to make false accusations against women of virtue. He ordered us to worship God and to associate no other God with Him. He told us to pray, to give alms, and to fast."

And then he enumerated for him all aspects of Islām. Can anyone have any disagreement with anything that Ja'far said? [Regarding] truth, trustworthiness, [and so on]? So it is important when we are speaking to somebody who does not know anything about Islām, to illuminate to them the aspects of Islām, the good teachings of Islām. Sometimes in our Da'wah we assume that people know that Islām teaches good; many do not, and Ja'far took that into consideration and he went through the morals and the character-building that Islām promotes. In addition to talking about the 'Ibādāt, he spoke about Salāh, Zakāh and Siyām, and he also spoke about Tawhīd which is very important to present – the worship of Allāh alone and tearing down the stones and idols. You can also notice that it was very brief and to the point; he did not go on and on and on in details, he did not turn it into an argument or a debate, because remember, he is dealing with a King; you cannot argue with such a person if you want to bring them closer to Islām. So he made it a very short and brief presentation, but it is complete, it is comprehensive, there is nothing missing. And then he said,

"And so we believed in him and trusted him, following him in the instructions he bought from God. We worship God alone without a partner and associating no one with Him. We forbade what he has forbidden and considered permissible what he allowed us. But our people aggressed against us and harmed us, seeking to draw us out of our faith, to return us to the worship of idols instead of God, and to have us again consider permissible the abominations we had previously allowed. When they treated us with violence and persecution, besieged us, and prevented us from performing our religion, we left for your country and chose you above others. We desired your hospitality and hoped we would not be harmed in your domain, O King."

Wonderful ending. Let us look at the statements before that. He said our people aggressed against us, harmed us, they tried to force us to give up our faith, they besieged us, they persecuted us. Do you not think that this will strike a chord

with An-Najāshī who is coming from a Christian background that stresses the issue of suffering and sacrifice? So these words must have brought An-Najāshī closer and would throw in his heart feelings of mercy towards these people, and a feeling of shared [suffering], of something that we have common between us; this suffering sounds like the suffering ʻĪsā went through, sounds similar to what the Prophets went through, because this is a man who was steeped in his religion. And then in the end Ja'far Bin Abī Tālib said that the reason why we came here was because we were looking forward to your hospitality, and we chose you over all other Kings of the world.

An-Najāshī and the Bishop Weep Heavily

An-Najāshī, the Negus – Negus is the translation of An-Najāshī – replied and said, "Did you bring anything with you from what he [Muhammad ﷺ] brought?" An-Najāshī now wants to hear Qurān. Ja'far Bin Abī Tālib recited some Āyāt of Qurān. Which Āyāt did he choose? There are many Āyāt that he could choose, [but] which Āyāt did he choose? Sūrah Maryam. Look at the choice of Āyāt; he recited to him verses from Sūrah Maryam. Umm Salamah says, "I swear, the Negus wept so hard, his beard was soaked, and all his Bishops cried so hard, they wet their Bibles." So it must have been an emotional presentation and recitation to cause An-Najāshī, the King, and his Bishops to cry. An-Najāshī wet his beard and the Bishops wet their Bibles which were laying in front of them.

People who Love Jesus get Emotional when they Hear the Story of Jesus in Qurān

One Brother, he was working as a taxi driver in the US, he said, "I was asked to drive a Priest from Coronado Island to San Diego, which was quite a long distance within the city. And it was very late at night. So we had a conversation and he asked me, 'What are you?' I said, 'I am a Muslim,' [I asked,] 'Who are you?' He replied, 'I am a Catholic Priest, and I am here for a convention.'" So this Brother said, "Do you know that our Qurān has spoken about Jesus? Would you like me to recite to you some verses in Qurān about Jesus?" He said, "Yes, go ahead." So the brother said, "I went on reciting verses from Sūrah Maryam and translating them, and I kept on going on and on and on and the Priest was silent sitting in the back; it was late at night and

he was sitting in the back." He said, "And then suddenly the Priest told me to stop, 'This is my destination.'" The Brother said, "When I looked at him, I saw tears running down his cheeks." That is how strongly influenced he was by the verses of Sūrah Maryam. He said, "But the good thing after that; he gave me a hundred dollar tip."

So people who love ʻĪsā, who love Jesus, when they hear the story of Jesus in Qurān, it is quite emotional. So it caused An-Najāshī to weep.

The Negus Refuses to Hand Over Muslims to Quraish

An-Najāshī, the Negus, refused to hand over the Muslims to the delegation of Quraish. And as soon as both the Muslims and the delegation of Quraish left, ʻAmr Ibn Al-ʻAas made a threat that I am going to make a comeback and I am going to bring an end to the Muslims. ʻAbdullāh Ibn Rabīʻah, or let us say his partner since there is a difference on the name [as we mentioned previously], his partner said, "No, do not do that, they are still our relatives," [he was telling him that] you do not have to go that far; fine, he refused to hand them over, let us just go back. ʻAmr Ibn Al-ʻAas said. "No, tomorrow I am going to come back and I am going to tell the King that they say that Jesus is a slave." He did go the next day and said, "They say some bad things about Jesus, they claim that he is a slave and he is not the son of God." ʻAmr Ibn Al-ʻAas does not believe in all of this stuff anyway, but it was just to cause Fitnah. So An-Najāshī obviously was quite concerned; An-Najāshī is a religious person and he does not want any heretics in his land, so he recalled the Muslims. Umm Salamah says, "There was nothing that worried us more than that event, it caused us great concern. Same thing; we decided that we are going to speak the truth, *Naqūlul Haqqa Ana Mā Kān* – we are going to say what our Prophet has taught us, we are going to tell the truth no matter what happens. We are going to speak the truth." Same thing; Ja'far Ibn Abī Tālib was to be their spokesman, and they went and An-Najāshī asked them, "What do you say about ʻĪsā?" He said, "We say that he is ʻAbdullāh – he is the servant of Allāh, he is the slave of Allāh, he is the Messenger of Allāh, he is the Word of Allāh casted on Maryam, Mary, the chaste and virgin." The Negus said, "There is no difference between what you say about him and what I say about him," and immediately the Bishops started making a commotion, they were angry to hear this response from An-Najāshī;

how can he approve such a thing? Even though it was all the same, with the exception of him being the servant of Allāh. But they said he is the Spirit of Allāh that was blown into Maryam, the Word of Allāh, that Mary was the chaste and virgin; it is all the same except for this difference, which is not a minor difference, it is a critical difference, on whether ʻĪsā, Jesus, is the son of Allāh or not. Now, the Christians of Abyssinia would have been Orthodox Christians who believed in the divinity of Jesus, so the Priests did not like what they heard. An-Najāshī stood and said, "Say whatever you want to say, these people are going to be free in my land." A decisive decision was made that these people are going to get my protection. And Umm Salamah says that ʻAmr Ibn Al-ʻAas and his partner were left with disgrace because An-Najāshī drove them out and even gave them back their gifts, because in the first visit of ʻAmr Ibn Al-ʻAas, the first thing An-Najāshī asked ʻAmr Ibn Al-ʻAas was, "What did you bring me from your land?" ʻAmr Ibn Al-ʻAas said, "I have brought you some leather products," and that was the best thing that An-Najāshī used to like; leather products. So he had this friendship relationship between him and ʻAmr Ibn Al-ʻAas, but when it came to principle, An-Najāshī stood with the truth and he refused to hand over As-Sahābah ﷺ.

So that is the story of Al-Hijrah to Abyssinia.

Reasons for Al-Hijrah to Abyssinia

What were the reasons for this Hijrah? How come the Muslims fled their land and went to Abyssinia? How come they would leave the best place on the face of the Earth, Makkah, and go somewhere else?

To Flee Persecution

Well, the first reason is to flee persecution. They were being tortured in Makkah, so Rasūlullāh ﷺ allowed them to leave to flee from this persecution, so that they would free themselves from this physical pain; that is the first reason. Ibn Hazm says, "When the number of Muslims increased and the persecution increased, Allāh allowed them to migrate."

To Safeguard their Faith

The second reason is to safeguard their faith. Not everyone will be able to handle the torture, some people would give up their Īmān. Not everyone has the strength of Bilāl, not everyone can resist what Khabbāb Ibn Al-Aratt went through, so if a person fears on the safety of their religion, they should go somewhere else. And Rasūlullāh ﷺ says, "*Lā Yuzillul Mu'minu Nafsah* – The Believer should not humiliate themselves, *Yu'arridu Nafsahū Li-Mā Lā Yutīqu Minal-Balā* – by facing harm which he is not able to handle." So if it is too much for a person to handle, then they should not put themselves in that difficult situation. To give you an example of what this concept means, there was once a man who came to Rasūlullāh ﷺ with pure gold the size of an egg, and he gave it to Rasūlullāh ﷺ and said, "This is Sadaqah, and it is all what I have." Rasūlullāh ﷺ was upset and said, "One of you would come and give up all of their wealth, and then after that they would come and ask me for assistance." So Rasūlullāh ﷺ did not want this person to give up all of his money and then ask for help. Keep your money, give what you are able to give, but keep some for yourself; why do you say this is all what I have? But then we know that Abū Bakr As-Siddīq ؓ at one point of time had given up all of his wealth to Rasūlullāh ﷺ and Rasūlullāh praised that. How come the response of the Messenger of Allāh was different? Rasūlullāh ﷺ knew in the situation of Abū Bakr ؓ that he can handle the situation, he can give up all of his wealth and he would not get down to the level of begging, he will be able to take care of himself. However, not everyone is like Abū Bakr ؓ, so for other people, they should not put themselves in that difficult situation that they are not able to handle. You give up everything in that moment of high emotions, but after that when things calm down, you start rethinking and saying, 'Oh, what have I done! I have given up all of my money, what can I do now?' So not everyone will be able to handle what was going on in Makkah, therefore Rasūlullāh ﷺ told them to leave and safeguard their religion. Ibn Ishāq says, "The Muslims then left towards Abyssinia fearing for their faith."

An Embarrassment for Quraish and a Secondary Base Outside of Makkah

Number Three: We have a quote here by Sayyid Qutb, and before I read this quote [I want to ask], what is your impression of the people who went to

Abyssinia? Were they the strong and noble among Quraish or were they the weak? They belonged to the strong and wealthy families of Quraish, and Sayyid Qutb states,

> "It would not be correct to say that they had gone there for reasons of personal safety alone, for they included some of the most powerful and wealthiest of the Prophet's followers and of his fellow tribesmen. The majority of them were from the tribe of Quraish including Ja'far Ibn Abī Tālib, and a number of young men who were accustomed to providing protection to the Prophet ﷺ, such as Az-Zubair Bin Al-Awwām, 'Abdur Rahmān Ibn 'Awf, Abū Salamah Al-Makhzūmī, 'Uthmān Ibn 'Affān, to mention a few. There were women belonging to some of the most prominent families of Quraish, such as Umm Habībah, the daughter of Abū Sufyān, the Quraish's unrivalled Non-Muslim leader, who would have never been persecuted in Makkah."

Umm Habībah would never have been persecuted in Makkah, no one would be able to touch her; she is the daughter of Abū Sufyān, the leader of Quraish. [Syed Qutb continues,]

> "There were no doubt other reasons for the Muslims' immigration to Abyssinia; there was the need to shake the religious and social foundations of Quraish's most noble and powerful families. There could be no greater insult or threat to the Quraish dynasties than seeing their proudest and most noble sons and daughters running away for conscientious and religious reasons, leaving their cultural heritage and tribal homeland behind."

So the ones who made Hijrah, belonging to the wealthiest and strongest families of Quraish, having them leave, according to the view of Sayyid Qutb, is to cause an embarrassment and to shake the structure of Quraish. And Quraish's position in Arabia was not because of the strength of its army – Quraish were small in number, nevertheless no one dared to attack them, and they used to be held in very high esteem, they had this deep respect in the hearts of everyone around them, and that was because of the values that they had – it was also because of their location next to the House of Allāh, and the fact that they were the guardians of Al-Ka'bah. So for the people to see that the noblest among their men and women had to leave Makkah to flee for the safety of their religion was

such an embarrassment for the people of Quraish, and it would shake their foundations in Arabia.

According to another author, Munīr Al-Ghadhbān, his view is that Rasūlullāh ﷺ wanted to have a secondary base outside of Makkah so that if something happens in Makkah [then] at least the Religion can survive somewhere else, and now since the numbers had increased, the Muslims could spare dividing into two groups; one group stays in Makkah, [and] one group would leave and stay in Abyssinia. And what would strengthen this view is the fact that the Muslims in Abyssinia never went back to meet the Prophet ﷺ when he was in Madīnah until the seventh year of Hijrah, they waited seven years after Rasūlullāh ﷺ made Hijrah to travel back to Madīnah. And they were not enjoying their stay, they wanted to be close to Rasūlullāh ﷺ, but they stayed there until they got the permission from Rasūlullāh ﷺ to come, and Rasūlullāh ﷺ gave them this permission when it was safe for them to come back; now Islām was firmly established. Because in the first few years in Madīnah, Madīnah was under constant threat, and the Muslims never really had safety; just because they had a State did not mean that they were secure, they were always under threat from an attack from one direction or another, but after seven years, Islām now had its roots deep, it was firmly established, it was strong, and that is when the Sahābah came back from Abyssinia.

Importance of Al-Hijrah to Al-Habashah in Our Current Situation

Now, brothers and sisters, I am spending more time than normal on this story of Al-Hijrah. Usually in books of Seerah they would just glance over the whole thing in a few pages and that is it, but we are spending a lot of time on this – we have already spent some time on the early session and we will spend some time this session – because of the importance of Al-Hijrah to Al-Habashah in our situation. This was a Muslim minority living among Non-Muslim majority, it was a predominantly Christian country, so there are some resemblances there, but when it comes to An-Najāshī, we do not have any personalities similar to him in the West – a deeply religious leader with justice – we have not had anything like that. Maybe at one moment of time, laws and constitutions of the West were somewhat close to the personality of An-Najāshī, but that has pretty

much changed now. But I still think that this is an important subject and we need to talk about it.

Now, unfortunately there is not a lot of narrations that survived dealing with Al-Habashah in particular and dealing with the Makkah era in general. If you open any book of Seerah, for example this book in front of me, the book is around seven hundred pages, and the Makkah era is a hundred and fifty. So a hundred and fifty pages are dealing with thirteen years of the life of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and everything before that, and then you have almost six hundred pages dealing with the last ten years of the life of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, so you can see the disproportion here. There are a few reasons for that:

Number One: The documentation of Hadīth was not allowed until the Muslims were in Madīnah. In Makkah, Rasūlullāh ﷺ did not allow them to write down Hadīth because he did not want it to mix with Qurān and cause confusion; let us first concentrate on Qurān, and then after that you can document the Hadīth. That is one reason.

Second Reason: Our early scholars were not very interested in Makkah compared to their interest in Madīnah. Why? Because all of the laws and issues relating to the Islāmic State were learned in Madīnah. Makkah did not really relate much to our early scholars because they were living under a Khilāfah and they were concerned with the Islāmic law, the Islāmic State, the institutions of the Muslim society, and all of that is to be learned from the ten years of Madīnah, not Makkah. So that is why you would find that the writings on Madīnah are detailed and elaborate while there is not much written about Makkah. Now I think we now need to give more focus to the thirteen years Rasūlullāh ﷺ spent in Makkah because there is a significant percentage of the Muslims around the world living as minorities. You have a hundred million plus living as a minority in India, sixty million Muslim minority in China, millions of Muslims living in Russia, millions of Muslims living in Western Europe, in Northern America, in South America. There is a lot of Fiqh that is needed for these Muslim minorities and that is to be learned from the years of Makkah, so we need more study to be done on the narrations that survived from Makkah.

Reasons for Choosing Al-Habashah

How come Rasūlullāh ﷺ chose Abyssinia to start with? Why not Syria? Why not ‘Irāq? Why not Egypt? How come Abyssinia? Why not the Persian Empire? The Roman Empire? The Byzantine Empire? There could have been many other choices; how come Rasūlullāh ﷺ chose Al-Habashah?

Justice

Well, the number one reason which is stated in the Hadīth, is the saying of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, “*Fa-Inna Bihā Malik Lā Yuzlamu ‘Indahū Ahad* – Go to Abyssinia because therein is a King who does not oppress anyone.” Justice was the primary reason for the Muslims going to Al-Habashah; they were in search of justice. Because they were fleeing persecution, so they needed to go to a place where they would get justice, and that was Abyssinia.

Familiarity with Al-Habashah

The second reason, which is a secondary reason, is the fact the Arabs were familiar with Al-Habashah. Number one, Quraish used to have business with Abyssinia, that was one of the areas that they would do business with in winter – people of Quraish had two journeys; one in summer and one in winter. One branch of the ones in winter would go to Al-Habashah, Abyssinia, so they already had an established commercial relationship. And number two, Rasūlullāh ﷺ from very early on was exposed to Abyssinian culture; his first nurse was from Al-Habashah. His first nurse Umm Ayman, who took care of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and breastfed him, she was from Al-Habashah, according to Sahīh Al-Muslim she was from Abysinnia. And Umm Ayman was not just Abyssinian [by name], but her culture, her language was Abyssinian. In one narration it states that she presented Rasūlullāh ﷺ with this food, so Rasūlullāh ﷺ asked, “What is this?” She said, “This is a dish that we make in Abyssinia and I wanted you to try it.” So she was even cooking some Abyssinian dishes in Arabia. Her accent; she could not get rid of her Abyssinian accent, for example, according to Ibn Sa’d, when she would say *Salāmullāhi ‘Alaikum*, which means ‘Peace of Allāh be upon you,’ she would say, *Salāmillāh ‘Alaikum*, which means ‘No peace on you’. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ would tell her, “Just say *Salām*; do not go beyond that, just say *Salām.*” Or in the Battle of Hunain, she was making Du‘ā' for the Muslims, she wanted to say *Thabbat Allāhu Aqdāmakum,* she said

Sabbat Allāhu Aqdāmakum. *Thabbat Allāhu Aqdāmakum* means 'May Allāh make your feet firm,' but rather than saying firm she was saying *Sabt* which means Saturday, which means the whole sentence does not mean anything. Rasūlullāh ﷺ told her, "*Uskutī Fa-Innaka 'Asrā Al-Lisān* – Stay quiet, because you have a difficult tongue." So she was not even able to get rid of her accent. And this was a person very close to Rasūlullāh ﷺ, and Rasūlullāh ﷺ remained close to her for all of his life, and he married her to his adopted son Zayd Bin Hārithah. So that was the familiarity of Rasūlullāh ﷺ with Al-Habashah which started very early on.

Abyssinians were Christians

Number Three: Because the Abyssinians were Christian, and the Muslims used to see the Christians the closest to them. When you compare them to the idol worshippers of Quraish or the Magians, Al-Majūsiyyah of Persia, the Christians were the closest.

Language of Communication

Now, what was the language of communication between Ja'far and An-Najāshī, the Negus? Probably it was Arabic. There are some narrations which state that the Negus lived for a few years in Hijāz and that he spoke Arabic, and even if he did not live in Arabia, because of these established commercial ties between the Arabs and the Abyssinians, it is possible that the Abyssinians spoke Arabic or knew Arabic. And this would make more sense because we would find it difficult to, for example, understand how the Negus would weep when he hears Qurān if it was translated through an interpreter. You know, when the Negus cried, we would suspect that he was understanding the meanings of the Āyāt in the original language for it to have that effect on him.

The Islām of An-Najāshī

Did the Negus become Muslim? He definitely did, even though according to Ibn Taymiyyah he was not capable of applying any of the laws of Islām. Ibn Taymiyyah says, "For a fact, An-Najāshī did not rule according to Qurān. The authentic opinion is that he did not even pray, [and] he did not make Hijrah, which was mandatory at the time." So he did not practice Islām, but he believed in the Oneness of Allāh, and he did what was possible for him to do for

someone in his position. And Ibn Taymiyyah also brought in over here the story of Sayyidinā Yūsuf ﷺ, he said even though Yūsuf ﷺ was a Nabï of Allāh, but he was not able to apply all of the laws of Allāh ﷻ on a Non-Muslim population. And actually Ibn Taymiyyah has a very interesting essay on this, I did not have time to translate it, but his views are quite fascinating regarding this issue of a Muslim ruling over Non-Muslims, or someone in this situation of An-Najāshī; what are their excuses in not applying the laws of Sharī'ah. We are not going to get into that, but definitely he did become a Muslim, and he was being taught Islām by Ja'far Ibn Abī Tālib, and he might have had some secret sessions with Ja'far Ibn Abī Tālib to study Islām because the Islām of An-Najāshī was not made public.

So when An-Najāshī passed away, in Al-Bukhārī, Rasūlullāh ﷺ says, "On this day a righteous man died in Abyssinia, so let us pray on him," let us make Salātul Janāzah on him. And Rasūlullāh ﷺ knew the exact day when An-Najāshī died, he knew it on the same day, which means that Jibrīl ﷺ came to Muhammad ﷺ to inform him about that event. So it was an important [enough] event that Jibrīl had to come and convey to Rasūlullāh ﷺ, and the Messenger of Allāh, *Al-Mustafā*, led Salāh on An-Najāshī, he prayed for him. In another Hadīth, Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "*Istaghfirū Li-Akhīkum* – Ask Allāh to forgive your brother." He was asking the Sahābah to make Du'ā' for An-Najāshī.

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Lessons from Al-Hijrah to Al-Habashah

Some lessons to Learn from the narrations:

Firmness and Steadfastness of Sahābah رضي الله عنهم

Number one which really stands out, and that is the firmness and the steadfastness of the Sahābah رضي الله عنهم. They held tight to their principles. They did not compromise even though they knew they would be in danger. They went to An-Najāshī and said, "'Īsā is the servant of Allāh." And in their earlier discussion, they said we are going to speak the truth no matter what happens. So it is important to have the spirit that we are not here to protect ourselves but we are here to protect our religion. Our religion comes first, even if we have to give

up our lives in the process. And we would go through whatever pain and suffering we have to, to safeguard Islām. So that is the first lesson.

Sahābah would Never Compromise Religion for Tradition

Second Lesson: They would not give in to the local traditions that would contradict Islām. They would adopt local traditions and culture that does not contradict with the Religion, but whenever they see a contradiction, they were willing to stand against it. It was the tradition of the Abyssinians to make Sujūd whenever they would come to greet the Negus, and when ‘Amr Ibn Al-‘Aas went to An-Najāshī, he said, “Beware, when these people come in they are not going to make Sujūd for you.” And when they came in, truly, as ‘Amr Ibn Al-‘Aas suspected, they did not make Sujūd. An-Najāshī was angry and he asked, “How come you do not make Sujūd to me like everybody else does?” They said, “We do not make Sujūd to anyone but Allāh.” In our religion, we do not make Sujūd for anyone but Allāh. And they had pride; even though they were in a foreign land living through difficult situations, but you can see that they had pride in their religion.

Jamā‘ah and Organisation

Number Three: When we say that the Muslims in Makkah had a Jamā‘ah and an Amīr, someone who wants to argue against this concept can come back and say, ‘Well, obviously they had a Jamā‘ah and an Amīr; Rasūlullāh ﷺ was there, what do you expect?’ Well what about in Abyssinia? Were the Muslims living like we are today; loose, and everyone is doing their own thing and going in their own direction? Or were they organised under one banner and a common leadership? This is one thing that stands out in all of the narrations, that the Muslims were organised, they were a group, and they worked together in a Jamā‘ah, and they had a leader – Ja’far Bin Abī Tālib; he was their spokesman, he was their Amīr. So this is not an optional thing, it is not something that if you like it you will do it. Muslims, wherever they are, they have to be in an organised fashion. This is an organised religion, it is not individual spiritual thing that you do on your own, it is a religion that has many of its ‘Ibādah done collectively to teach us the spirit of Jamā‘ah; Salāh is done collectively, Hajj is done collectively. So Muslims living in the West, they have to organise, they have to come together in a movement, and they have to have a common leadership which they stand

behind. The decision was made in Abyssinia that only one man will speak, and we will not interfere or go against and contradict what he is saying.

Participation of Muslim Women

Number Four: You can see the extent of the participation of Muslim women, and now I want you to contrast this and balance it with what I spoke about earlier on when I was speaking about the role of the Muslim woman as a wife and a mother. You see, Islām is somewhere between the two extremes. In every matter, you have the two extremes; *Tarafāni Wa Wasat* – two extremes and a middle. Islām is the middle of everything, it is the middle way; *Ummatan Wasatā*. So for every situation you have two extremes, and the Fiqh and the wisdom is to know where the exact middle is. Because you have a lot of points on a spectrum, but only one point, one dot, is the middle. So it is very easy to hit everything but the middle ground, but it is not easy to hit the exact target of middle ground, and that is where the Fiqh and wisdom comes into play. It is very evident in the early Muslims' history that the Muslim sister had a very important role to play. The first Muslim was a woman, the first *Shahīd* in Islām was a woman – the first martyr was Sumayyah. You can see the participation of Muslim women in Hijrah to Abyssinia, their participation in the Hijrah to Madīnah, their participation in Jihād, their participation in Jamā'ah, their participation in teaching and learning. So some of the artificial barriers that we have erected now did not exist in the time of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Among us today are people who are carrying it to the both extremes; one extreme is that men and women can mix and laugh and joke without any barriers, hijab is optional, and then on the other extreme, even the voice of a woman is not allowed to be spoken in public; we might as well just have them living in a different planet. So these are two extremes, but we need to find the middle road. And I want to give you an example to show you the relationship that men and women had in the time of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, and this conversation is relevant to the immigration to Al-Habashah. When the Muslims came back to Madīnah in the seventh year of Hijrah, the wife of Ja'far Ibn Abī Tālib, Asmā' Bint 'Umais, went to visit Hafsah, the daughter of 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb, who was the wife of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb came to visit his daughter, and he came in and saw this woman sitting in her room [and] he asked her, "Who is this woman?" She said, "*Hādhihī Asmā' Bint 'Umais* – This is Asmā' Bint 'Umais." 'Umar Ibn Al-

Khattāb asked, "*Al-Habashiyyah?* – Is this the Abyssinian woman?" – Not that she is from Abyssinia, but he was referring to the fact that she has been in Abyssinia for so long. – "Is this the Abyssinian woman? *Al-Bahriyyah?* – Is this the woman who came from the sea?" Because they had to cross the sea to get into Madīnah. Hafsah said, "Yes." 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb told Asmā', "We made Hijrah before you, therefore we have more rights to Rasūlullāh than you do." Straight, like that; he went to her and said we made Hijrah before you therefore we are closer to Rasūlullāh ﷺ than you and we have more rights to him than you do. Asmā' was quite angered by that statement and she said, "No, you are not closer to Rasūlullāh ﷺ than us, you were with the Messenger of Allāh, he was feeding the hungry among you, teaching the ignorant among you, while we were in a distant despised land." We were in a faraway land and despised, we were not very comfortable over there, we did not like it being far away from Rasūlullāh ﷺ. We were feeling homesick to the Messenger of Allāh, not to Makkah, it was to the Messenger of Allāh, we wanted to be with him. And then she said, "And I am going to go and tell Rasūlullāh ﷺ what you are saying now and I am not going to add anything to it or subtract anything, I am going to say it as you said it." And she went to Rasūlullāh ﷺ and said, "This is what 'Umar told me." Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "And what did you say?" And she repeated the same statement. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "No, 'Umar and his companions do not have more rights than you do to me," meaning they are not closer to me than you, "they have the reward of one Hijrah and you have the rewards of two Hijrah." You get double the reward than they do. Asmā' Bint 'Umais said, "When Rasūlullāh ﷺ mentioned this Hadīth to me, the Sahābah who were in Abyssinia, Abū Mūsā Al-Ash'arī and his friends, would come to me in large groups, all trying to learn this Hadīth of Rasūlullāh ﷺ from me, [and] there was nothing better for them in this world than this Hadīth." This Hadīth was so valuable to them, it was worth the world and everything in it. So here you see that first of all, 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb is speaking to this woman, and they are having a conversation, and it was a straight-forward conversation, and then Asmā' Bint 'Umais is teaching the Sahābah, Abū Mūsā Al-Ash'arī and the other men, about this Hadīth. So this was the nature of the relationship that existed. Obviously, if you look at all of the references we have that deal with the relationship of men and women, you would find that there was an element of formality in their dealings, you would not find any incident where they would joke and laugh with

each other. So they knew their limits, but at the same time it was not that extreme as we might see among some Muslims now.

Umm Habībah ﷺ

An example of the participation and the strength of the early Muslims would be Umm Habībah. Ya'nī [regarding] Umm Habībah ﷺ, keep in mind the following factors and see how difficult it was on her.

Number one, she is the daughter of the unrivalled leader of Makkah, Abū Sufyān. So for her to leave that comfortable life – wealth, nobility in her society – and go and live as a foreigner in an alien land, is not easy. So number one, she was the daughter of Abū Sufyān. Number two, she is living in a foreign land. Number three, which was disastrous; when her husband ['Ubaidillāh Bin Jahsh] reached to Abyssinia, he apostatised and became Christian. He was one of the Sahābah who made Hijrah, [but] when he got there he changed his mind. Now, 'Ubaidillāh Bin Jahsh went through different stages in his life, he kept on flipping back and forth before Islām, changing his mind and going into different religions, so this was his personality. So when he got there to Al-Habashah, he just changed from being a Muslim to being a Christian, and the most influential person on a woman is her husband. And it was very difficult for Umm Habībah to deal with this situation, her husband apostatising and becoming Christian. Obviously after that they had to separate. Keep all of these factors in mind and see how strong she was, and how steadfast she was, and how she was able to hold firm on her religion.

Ruling on Hijrah

What is the ruling on Hijrah? [Number one:] Migration is compulsory if a Muslim individual is unable to establish his basic Islāmic practices in the land, such as Prayer, fasting and the Adhān. If a Muslim is unable to establish the essential practices of Islām, then they must find somewhere else. [Number two:] It is permissible, if a Muslim is confronted with problems that make life difficult in that land, to leave his land to another land of Islām seeking relief. Number three: It [Hijrah] is forbidden if by leaving a Muslim neglects the Islāmic duty in his land that no one can replace him in. If someone is playing a critical role and no one can step in and take that role, then it is forbidden for a person to leave.

Ruling on Living among Non-Muslims

What is the ruling on living among Non-Muslims? And that is one topic that Muslims in the West have been avoiding talking about. We shy away from certain topics because they are controversial, we do not want to deal with them, but eventually we will be faced with real problems that will force us to deal with these issues, and we need to have frank discussions on such matters, we cannot just throw them in the closet, brush them under the carpet, and think that they will go away. When it comes to living in a Non-Muslim land, it is the consensus of Muslim scholars that it is not allowed, and the Ahādīth are very clear, "*Ana Barīun Min Man Aqāma Baina Zahrāniyyal Mushrikīn* – I have nothing to do with a Muslim who lives among the ones who associate gods besides Allāh." This is one Hadīth of many different narrations. The scholars gave exceptions, they said if a person is propagating the Message of Islām, and is practicing Islām freely, then that is an excuse for them to stay. They also gave temporary excuse for someone who is doing business or seeking knowledge, but this is on a temporary basis, it is not to settle indefinitely. Therefore it is not allowed for us to live in Non-Muslim environments unless we are fulfilling our responsibilities of Da'wah, otherwise we are accumulating sins by default. So Da'wah is not an optional thing for us but it is something that justifies a Muslim living in a Non-Muslim society. And we need to understand Da'wah in a comprehensive way; it does not mean that every single person needs to do the same thing, we mean the Da'wah in a comprehensive way. Anything that is serving the welfare of Islām, anything that serves the propagation of the Message, would fall under Da'wah, it does not necessarily mean that you are distributing leaflets to Non-Muslims or you are giving speeches to them, these are two ways, but there are many others. Relief work is work of Da'wah, charitable work is work of Da'wah, teaching Muslims living in the West is a work of Da'wah too, so we need to understand this concept of Da'wah in a comprehensive way.

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‘Uthmān Ibn Maz‘ūn Gives Up Protection

‘Uthmān Ibn Maz‘ūn was one of the Muhājirīn who were in Abyssinia, he came back to Makkah, and since he left, he had to come in with some protection, and he was offered protection by Al-Walīd Bin Mughīrah who was one of the elders of Makkah. ‘Uthmān Ibn Maz‘ūn entered into Makkah, he saw that every other Muslim was going through persecution except for himself, this did not make him happy, he felt jealous; how come everyone else is going through this purification of their sins except myself? So he went to Al-Walīd Bin Mughīrah and told him, “I do not need your protection, I am giving it back to you.” He [Walīd] asked, “Why my son are you doing that?” He said, “I want the protection of Allāh, I do not want your protection.” Walīd said, “Well, since I have given you protection publicly, you have to give it back publicly.” So they went next to Al-Ka’bah and Al-Walīd Bin Mughīrah said, “‘Uthmān Ibn Maz‘ūn has given me back my protection.” ‘Uthmān Ibn Maz‘ūn said, “Yes, I did find Al-Walīd Bin Mughīrah to be a very trustworthy and honest man, but I want to be under the protection of Allāh and Allāh alone.” Later on, he was sitting in a gathering around one of the most famous poets of Arabia, Lubaid, and Lubaid was reciting some of his poetry, and he said, “*Kullu Shay'in Khalallāha Bātilun* – Everything save God is vanity.” Everything is going to go away. ‘Uthmān said, “Yes, you are right.” Now, this was a gathering that held a lot of people. And then he [Lubaid] continued and said, “*Wa Kullu Na‘īmin Lā Mahālata Za'ilun* – And all pleasures must fade.” ‘Uthmān Ibn Maz‘ūn interrupted and said, “That is wrong, the pleasures of Paradise never fade away.” Lubaid, being a respected, famous poet of Arabia, was kind of shocked; how could someone in the audience respond to me like that? So he said, “O men of Quraish, those who sat with you used to not be so insulted, when did this come about so?” So one man in the audience said, “Do not worry about it, this is one of the fools who followed the religion of Muhammad, do not take it to heart.” ‘Uthmān Ibn Maz‘ūn responded and they had a fight. So the man stood up and he punched ‘Uthmān Ibn Maz‘ūn in his eye until the whole thing was black. Al-Walīd Ibn Mughīrah saw this and he came to ‘Uthmān and said, “There was no need for your eye to go through that suffering. You were under my protection, why did you give it up?” ‘Uthmān Ibn Maz‘ūn said, “No, not so. I swear, the only problem is that my good eye is in need of what the other one suffered for God’s sake. Actually I am under the protection of One stronger and more capable than

yourself, O Ibn ‘Abd Shams.” Al-Walīd offered again and said, “Do you want to come back to my protection?” ‘He said, “No, I want to be under the protection of Allāh.” And remember that some of these are from Ahādīth, some of them are from Seerah; we are trying to mix both, to learn from Ahādīth and to learn from Seerah.

Abū Bakr ﷺ Gives Up Protection

Abū Bakr As-Siddīq ﷺ did not make Hijrah to Abyssinia but he was suffering in Makkah, so he requested permission from Rasūlullāh ﷺ to allow him to migrate; Rasūlullāh ﷺ gave him permission. Abū Bakr ﷺ left Makkah and he reached to Bark Al-Ghamād in Yemen, and then he met with Sayyid Al-Ahābīsh Ibn Dughunnah; Al- Ahābīsh are a tribe who used to live close to Makkah. Abū Bakr met with him, [and] Ibn Dughunnah asked him, “Abū Bakr, where are you heading towards?” Abū Bakr said, “My people have offended me, treated me badly, and forced me to leave.” Ibn Dughunnah said, “Such a person like you is an asset to his people. You are not a person to leave, and you are not the person to be driven out of your land.” Why? Because, he said, “You aid those who are in distress and you are kindly towards the needy.” And then he said, “Go back, you are under my protection.” And he took him to Makkah and he went in front of the people of Makkah and said, “Abū Bakr is under my protection. How you can drive out such a person from your land?! He is an asset for you. You drive out a person like Abū Bakr? He is under my protection.” The people of Quraish came to Ibn Dughunnah and said, “Well, we accept your protection but we are not going to allow Abū Bakr to worship publicly, so please make sure that he does not [do this].” Ibn Dughunnah came to Abū Bakr and said, “Your people do not want you to offend them, so do not worship publicly.” Previously what Abū Bakr would do is he would pray outside in front of the people, and ‘Ā'ishah said, “My father used to be a man with a very soft heart, and when he would recite the verses of Qurān, he would cry.” So you would have all of the kids and women and men attracted around Abū Bakr watching him, and this turned the people of Quraish crazy, they felt that this will be a Fitnah for their people, seeing this Khushū’ in Abū Bakr. So Ibn Dughunnah told Abū Bakr to worship privately and Abū Bakr agreed. For a while, Abū Bakr was praying in the privacy of his home, and then he had an idea, he decided to make a *Musallā* in the *Fanā'* of his house; Fanā' is an open

area of the house. In some styles of Islāmic architecture, usually you would have the house built in [the shape of] a square and in the middle it is empty, so that would be Fanā'. Or Fanā' could mean like a backyard or something, a place that is open but is part of the house. So Abū Bakr took his Fanā' to be a Musallā, so even though it was inside his house, but people could still see it from outside. So now the same problem happened again, all of the people would gather and there would be crowds outside the house of Abū Bakr, watching him pray; they were amazed by the Khushū' that Abū Bakr As-Siddīq had. The people of Quraish were furious, they went to Ibn Dughunnah and they said, "We told you, we do not want him to worship publicly." So Ibn Dughunnah went to Abū Bakr and spoke to him about it and Abū Bakr ﷺ said, "I will give you your protection back, I do not need it, I will be in the protection of Allāh." And he did give up the protection of Ibn Dughunnah.

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Lessons from the Story of Abū Bakr ﷺ

A few notes on the story of Abū Bakr:

Hijrah Purely for the Sake of Worshipping Allāh

Number One: When he [Abū Bakr] met with Ibn Dughunnah and Ibn Dughunnah asked him, "How come you are migrating from your land?" Abū Bakr As-Siddīq said in one narration, "*Asīhū Fil Ard Urīdu Ana A'budu Rabbī* – I want to travel in the land in order to worship my Lord." So now Abū Bakr is leaving with no purpose but to worship Allāh, to go in the land and worship Allāh ﷻ, seeking freedom. What will he do with that freedom? Worship Allāh. They would use every resource that they had to please Allāh ﷻ. He was not travelling to do business, he said, "I want to worship Allāh, that is why I am leaving."

Muslims should have a Righteous Reputation

Second Lesson: What did Ibn Dughunnah know about Abū Bakr? What was the reputation that Abū Bakr had among the Non-Muslims? Caring for the needy, providing for the poor, sponsoring the orphan, standing up for right; that was the

reputation of Abū Bakr, he was not known for ill manners and corrupt character, he was known for these righteous values which every person on the face of the Earth who has decency would recognise their value. And this should be the personality of the Muslim wherever they are, this should be what the people know of you; your righteousness, your standing up for what is right, your charitable work, and that is what led Ibn Dughunnah to say that I am going to give you protection, he said, "You are an asset for your people, we cannot let you leave, we cannot allow you to leave Makkah! You are a credit to them, you are a pride for your people." And this should be the reputation of every Muslim, this is what the people should know about us.

Public 'Ibādāt is Da'wah

Number Three: His Salāh was a Da'wah. Publicly practicing the rituals of Islām is Da'wah. For the people to see Hajj, for them to see our *Iftār* in Ramadān, [is Da'wah]. We used to hold in our mosque open dinners in Ramadān, we would invite the neighbourhood to come and break fasting with us, and some of them would even fast – they are Non-Muslims – they would fast, they would join in, in fact, many people seemed to be enthusiastic to participate with Muslims in Ramadān. Let them do that, let them go ahead, let them taste the value of Siyām, the flavour of it, and invite them to have Iftār, let them see the socialisation that the Muslims have in Ramadān. Salāh, Salāh At-Tarawīh; we should not hide in our enclaves, in our Masājid, and close it off to the public, this is Da'wah. Abū Bakr As-Siddīq would do it in public and the people of Quraish were furious because they thought that this will attract the people to Islām, seeing the Khushū' that he had would bring them closer to Allāh ﷻ. So we should publicly do these 'Ibādāt because there is a special flavour in them and there is a uniqueness in the rituals that Allāh ﷻ has prescribed on us. And that will also relate to number four:

We Should Publicise the Message

Number Four: We should publicise the Message. The enemies of Islām would not mind if you are praying in your cubicle; that is your private life, we are not going to interfere with it, but they are going to be resistant to you doing it in public, and that is what we should do, because we want to attract the good

among all people to become Muslim, and the good heart will be attracted by good things.

We finished *Al-Hijrah Ilā Al-Habashah*.

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Major Events

The Islām of Hamzah Bin ‘Abdul Muttalib ﷺ

Hamzah Bin ‘Abdul Muttalib was a hunter, he would go out and hunt in the desert, and then he would come back and tell all the stories about his hunting expeditions. So one day while he was out hunting, Abū Jahl approached Rasūlullāh ﷺ and started cursing Muhammad ﷺ, while the Messenger of Allāh was silent. Rasūlullāh ﷺ would not respond to the ignorant words, ***Wa A’rid ‘Anil Jāhilīn*** **–** Allāh ﷻ has told Muhammad ﷺ: **Turn away from the ignorant.**[73] The Muslim should not be side-tracked by trivial issues and should not turn the Da’wah into a personal thing, one should not take it personally. If the insults are directed towards a person because that person is calling to Islām, one should not take it personally. Allāh ﷻ says: **We know that you, [O Muhammad], are saddened by what they say. And indeed, they do**

not call you untruthful, but it is the verses of Allāh that the wrongdoers reject.[74] They are not rejecting you, they are rejecting the Message that you are presenting them with, that is what they are against. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ was calm and he did not respond back to Abū Jahl. Abū Jahl then threw a rock at Muhammad ﷺ and hit him in his head, and Rasūlullāh ﷺ was bleeding. A slave-girl saw that, and when Hamzah came back from hunting, she went and told him the whole story. Hamzah obviously was very upset when he heard that this happened to his nephew Muhammad ﷺ, even though Hamzah was a *Mushrik* – a Non-Believer at the time, but because of the relationship between him and Muhammad ﷺ, he felt that an attack on Muhammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, was an attack on himself. So he walked up to Abū Jahl, and Abū Jahl was sitting with other leaders of Quraish right in front of Al-Ka'bah, and Hamzah just came back from hunting and he was still carrying his bow with him, and he walked up straight to Abū Jahl and he hit him on his head with his bow and said, "Take it! And I am now following the religion of Muhammad." When Hamzah said that, he did not say it out of conviction, he said it out of pride, he said it to anger Abū Jahl, and when that happened and blood was starting to flow out of the head of Abū Jahl, Banū Makhzūm, the relatives of Abū Jahl, stood up to fight Hamzah, but then Banū Hāshim stood up to protect Hamzah, and they were about to fight until Abū Jahl interfered and said, "No, leave Abū 'Imārah alone – leave Hamzah alone – because I did shamelessly attack his nephew Muhammad ﷺ." So Abū Jahl calmed things down.

When Hamzah went back home, there is a narration that states that Hamzah went back home and he was surprised at the action he himself took. And he went back and when his emotions calmed down, he started to assess the situation; did I do the right thing? What have I done? And he felt that he was in trouble, because he did not think it out properly, and he was asking himself, 'Should I become a Muslim or not?' Now, if I want to withdraw, I have already told Abū Jahl that I am a Muslim and that is dishonouring [my word]. In their culture it was not right to change your opinion just like that; you say that you are a Muslim and then the next day you just change your mind and say, 'No, I was wrong.' So it was difficult for him to back out, but then the same thing, it was difficult for him to commit because he never really thought about it. So Hamzah said, "At night, I spent my whole night praying to Allāh, asking Him to

guide me to the truth, and to tell me if I have done the right thing or not." So he was praying to Allāh ﷻ at night and was saying, "O Allāh, if this is the right decision, then put the love of it in my heart, if it is the wrong decision then please, O Allāh, find a way out for me." Now, you can notice here that these people used to pray to Allāh ﷻ. When they would make Du'ā', they would make Du'ā' to Allāh, so their religion was a religion of confusion. They worshipped Allāh but then they still worshipped other gods, and when you would ask them why are you worshipping the other gods, they would say because these gods are intermediaries between us and Allāh, and then they would say that Allāh has daughters – the angels. So it was a big lump of confusion mixed in with culture and tradition, but there was still some traces of the religion of Ismā'īl in there, for example, they still did Hajj, even though they did it the wrong way, they still gave sanctity to the House of Allāh ﷻ, even though they surrounded it with idols, but some remnants of the religion of Ismā'īl were retained.

Hamzah Bin 'Abdul Muttalib said, "Early in the morning, I woke up and I had my heart filled with love of Islām. So I went to Rasūlullāh ﷺ and I told him that I am a Muslim." And that was one of the greatest moments for Rasūlullāh ﷺ, to now have his dear uncle Hamzah on his side – Hamzah Bin 'Abdul Muttalib. So that is how Hamzah ؓ became Muslim. Obviously this must have caused agony to Abū Jahl; Abū Jahl would have thought that I have done good by hurting Muhammad ﷺ, but then eventually that was the cause of the Islām of Hamzah. And that is the Qadr of Allāh; you never know what will be the cause of good, so ***'Asā An Takrahū Shay'an Wa Huwa Khairullakum*** **– Perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you.**[75] Abū Jahl thought that he was harming Islām by hurting Rasūlullāh ﷺ, he did not know that his own action would be the cause of the Islām of Hamzah Bin 'Abdul Muttalib. And Ibn Ishāq says, "*Wa Kāna Islāmu Hamiyyah* – The Islām of Hamzah was out of pride, but then it turned into sincerity." So initially it was done with the wrong intention, he did it just to show Abū Jahl that I am with my nephew, but then Allāh ﷻ changed it into [it] becoming for the sake of Allāh and for the sake of Allāh alone. And one scholar said, "I started studying Islām to show off and to argue and to debate, but then after that, the knowledge of the Religion of Allāh humbled me and I became sincere." So I started out with the wrong intention but then down the line my intention was being rectified and corrected. So the Religion of Allāh, after it

stays in a heart for a long time, it draws a person closer and closer to *Ikhlās* – sincerity.

The Islām of ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb ﷺ

The Last Person who you would think would become Muslim

‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb, as you all know from his early history, was a staunch enemy of Islām, and we mentioned how ruthless he was in persecuting the Muslims. One day, Lailah, the wife of ‘Āmir Bin Rabī‘ah, met ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb. ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb asked her, “Umm ‘Abdillāh, where are you heading?” She said, “You have maltreated us and oppressed us, so I am going to leave to one of God’s countries to worship my Lord.” She was leaving towards Abyssinia. And ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb told her, “*Sahhibat Kis-Salāmah* – May peace be with you,” may you have a safe journey. That was a very strange statement to come from ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb, ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb showed no sympathy towards any Muslim, male or female, so for ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb to make Du‘ā' for this woman and to say, ‘May peace be with you, may you have a safe journey,’ shocked her. This was the end of the conversation between her and ‘Umar, and then ‘Umar left. When her husband came, she told him, “Do you know what happened?” He said, “What?” She said, “I met ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb,” – and that was not good news! And then she said, – “and he asked me where I was going and I told him, and then he told me in a very sympathetic way, ‘May you have a safe journey.’” So her husband laughed and said, “Are you expecting that ‘Umar will become a Muslim?” She said, “Maybe, why not?” He laughed and said, “‘Umar will not become a Muslim until the donkey of his father does.” It is impossible! *Himār Al-Khattāb* – the donkey of his father will become a Muslim before this man does, take that idea out of your mind, forget about it, it is just impossible, he cannot become a Muslim! That was their impression of ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb.

‘Umar’s First Step towards lslām

‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb narrates, and he is narrating his own story, he says, “I used to love drinking, I was in love with wine, and I had some drinking partners whom I would meet every night, and we used to meet in a place in Hazwarah, so I went late that evening to meet my friends.” He was going to the pub down the

street, and he did not find anyone, there was no one there. He said, "So I decided to go to the wine dealer, but I found his shop closed." 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb said, "I went around looking for other options [but] I did not find anyone, it was too late [in the night]. [So I thought] since the pub is closed and the liquor store is closed then why not go and make Tawāf around Al-Ka'bah? Do something better." 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb said, "I went to make Tawāf around Al-Ka'bah," and who do you expect he found there? Who else would be praying next to Al-Ka'bah at that late hour of the night? Muhammad ﷺ. He said, "There was no one there but me and Muhammad ﷺ, and Rasūlullāh did not sense my presence." 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb says in one narration, "I wanted to sneak and attack him," and in another narration, "I wanted to listen to what he was reciting." So 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb said, "Rasūlullāh ﷺ would pray with Ka'bah in front of him towards the direction of Jerusalem." Therefore Rasūlullāh ﷺ would be praying towards the wall of Al-Ka'bah that had the Yemeni corner of the Black Stone. 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb said, "I went from behind and I was hiding between the cloth of Al-Ka'bah and the Ka'bah." So 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb had his back towards Al-Ka'bah and he had the cloth of Al-Ka'bah over him, so you cannot see him. And he said, "I was sneaking around Al-Ka'bah until I was right in front of Muhammad ﷺ, nothing is between me and him except the cloth of Al-Ka'bah, but he could not see me. And I was able to hear his recitation, he was right in front of me, and he was reciting from Sūrah Al-Hāqqah." He said, "And I just froze in my tracks listening to the wonderful words of Qurān. And then I told myself, 'These must be the words of a poet.'" The next Āyah that Rasūlullāh ﷺ recited in Sūrah Al-Hāqqah was: ***Wa Mā Huwa Biqawli Shā'irin Qalīlam Mā Tu'minūn*** **– And it is not the word of a poet; little do you believe.**[76] 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb said, "I was shocked and I said to myself, 'These must be words of a soothsayer, how did he know what was in my heart? These must be words of a soothsayer.'" The next Āyah was: ***Wa Lā Biqawli Kāhinin Qalīlam Mā Tadhakkarūn*** **– Nor the word of a soothsayer; little do you remember.**[77] 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb said, "That was the first step in bringing me towards lslām." Now the foundation of Kufr in the heart of 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb is cracked, nevertheless his heart is still filled with hatred towards Muhammad ﷺ and the Muslims; he was not there yet, he was one step closer, but he still inhibited because of the hatred that he has in his heart towards the Muslims.

‘Umar ﷺ on his Way to Kill Muhammad ﷺ

One day ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb decided that he was going to bring an end to this misery, to this disunity among Quraish; once and for all I am just going to go and kill Muhammad ﷺ no matter what happens. ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb had this dedication, he believed that he needs to rid his people from these *Sābi'īn* – anyone who would become Muslim they would call them Saba'/Sābi'īn/Sabians, in other words they apostatised from the religion. So ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb said, “I am going to go and kill him.” He heard that Muhammad ﷺ was with forty of his followers in *Dārul Arqam*, he picked up his sword [and was] walking down the streets of Makkah alone. Now, ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb knows that he would be killed if he tries to kill Muhammad ﷺ, but he was determined to do it. Walking down the streets of Makkah, who did he meet? He met one of his relatives who was Muslim in secret, Nu‘aim. So Nu‘aim saw ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb and he saw evil in his eyes and anger, [and] he asked ‘Umar, “Where are you heading?” He said, “I am going towards Muhammad to kill him.” Nu‘aim now has to think on the spot; what did he say? Nu‘aim said, “Why do you not take care of your household first?” ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb said, “What is wrong with my household?” Nu‘aim said, “Your sister has become Muslim.” By saying that, Nu‘aim has put the sister of ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb and her husband in danger. Why would Nu‘aim do that? Why did he put Fātimah Bint Al-Khattāb and her husband in danger? He did it because he wanted to save Muhammad ﷺ. So the Sahābah held Rasūlullāh ﷺ in high esteem and they saw that they could sacrifice their lives if it was going to protect his. So Nu‘aim told ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb, and this was news to him, that your sister has become Muslim, and Fātimah was the wife of Sa‘eed Bin Zayd Bin ‘Amr Bin Nufayl; Sa‘eed is one of the ten who were given the glad-tidings of Jannah. ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb changed course and now he was heading towards his sister’s house. Khabbāb Bin Aratt was teaching Fātimah and her husband Qurān, so he had the scroll with him and he was reciting to them Sūrah Tā-Hā. When they heard the footsteps of ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb, Khabbāb went into hiding and Fātimah took the scroll and she hid it under her thigh. And then ‘Umar came in, and he said, “What was that sound that I heard?” They said, “We did not hear anything.” ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb said, “Yes, I did hear you recite something. Tell me what it was.” And then he said, “And I have heard that you have become Muslim”, and he immediately attacked Sa‘eed Bin Zayd and he started punching him.

Fātimah interfered and rose up to defend her husband, ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb hit her in her face. When ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb saw blood flowing out of the face of his sister, he became very sorry and he apologised. She said, “I have become Muslim and my husband is Muslim, and do whatever you want.” ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb said, “Give me that scroll you were reading.” She said, “No.” ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb swore in the name of his gods that I am going to return it back to you, give it to me. She said, “*Innaka Mushrikun Najas* – You are Polytheist and you are impure.” ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb went and washed himself and he came back. So she gave him the scroll and ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb recited the first verses of Sūrah Tā-Hā.

Bismillāhir Rahmānir Rahīm.

Tā-Hā. We have not sent down to you the Qur'an that you be distressed, But only as a reminder for those who fear [Allāh] - A revelation from He who created the Earth and highest heavens, The Most Merciful [who is] above the Throne established. To Him belongs what is in the heavens and what is on the Earth and what is between them and what is under the soil. And if you speak aloud - then indeed, He knows the secret and what is [even] more hidden. Allāh - there is no deity except Him. To Him belong the best names.[78]

And ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb went on reciting these words, and when he finished he said, “These are wonderful words.” When Khabbāb Ibn Al-Aratt heard that, he came out of hiding and said, “O ‘Umar! I hope that God will choose you, because I heard the Messenger of Allāh yesterday make a Du‘ā' and say, ‘O Allāh! Guide one of the two ‘Umars; ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb or ‘Amr Bin Hishām’, and I hope that you are the one Allāh will select.” Rasūlullāh ﷺ, just one day before, made a prayer and said, “O Allāh! Guide one of the two ‘Umars,” and who are they? ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb and the other one is ‘Amr Bin Hishām. Who is ‘Amr Bin Hishām? Abū Jahl. Rasūlullāh ﷺ asked Allāh to strengthen Islām with one of these two men. ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb told Khabbāb Ibn Al-Aratt, “I want to become Muslim, where can I meet Muhammad?” Khabbāb told him, “Go and meet him in Dārul Arqam.”

‘Umar Accepts Islām

‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb went to Dārul Arqam and he knocked on the door. Rasūlullāh ﷺ would hold secret meetings with the Sahābah in Dārul Arqam because the movement of Islām in Makkah was underground, it was not public. So one of the Companions stood up and he peeked through the door, and who would he see in front of him? ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb. He went to Rasūlullāh ﷺ, [and] it says in the narration that the Sahābī was frightened and surprised and he told Muhammad ﷺ, “‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb is outside, and he is carrying his sword too.” Because remember, ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb was carrying his sword; his intention was to go and kill Muhammad ﷺ, so he was carrying his sword with him. This Companion had all the right to be frightened; this was ‘Umar. Now, who in that gathering offered to go and open the door? Who is the one who can stand up and face ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb? Who would it be? Well, Rasūlullāh ﷺ did go later on but who was the one who first stood up and said, “I am going to go?” Hamzah Bin ‘Abdul Muttalib; the one who would stand up against ‘Umar was Hamzah Bin ‘Abdul Muttalib. He said, “O Messenger of Allāh, if ‘Umar has come for a good reason, we will reciprocate, but if he has come with the wrong intentions, then I will kill him with his own sword.” Rasūlullāh ﷺ told Hamzah, “No, I will open the door for him.” Rasūlullāh ﷺ went and he opened the door.

Now, ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb was one of the tallest men of Quraish. When ‘Umar was Khalīfah, they received some pieces of cloth from one of the Islāmic states. ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb distributed these cloths evenly, he gave everyone one piece. When ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb stood to give *Khutbah*, he had two pieces on, so ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb said, “*Isma‘ū Wa Atī‘ū* – Listen and obey!” Salmān Al-Fārsī stood up and said, “We will not listen and we will not obey.” ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb asked, “How come?” Salmān said, “Because you have given each one of us one piece and you are wearing two pieces.” ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb did not respond, he told his son ‘Abdullāh to stand up and respond to what Salmān was saying. ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar stood up and said, “My father is a very tall man, very well-built, one piece of cloth would not be enough for him, so I gave him mine.” Salmān Al-Fārsī said, “*Fal-Ān Nasma’ Wa Nutī’* – Now we will hear and obey.” So this was the standard of justice that they had, even the Khalīfah could not have preference over the masses. There were people who

were willing to stand up and fix the mistakes that they would see, *Inkār Al-Munkar*, like Salmān Al-Fārsī. So ʻUmar Ibn Al-Khattāb was not only tall but he was very well-built, and for a while he was a wrestler, he used to wrestle in Makkah at his young age, so he was a huge well-built man. Rasūlullāh ﷺ opened the door for ʻUmar Ibn Al-Khattāb, and Rasūlullāh ﷺ was described as being of medium height and medium build. Rasūlullāh ﷺ was not short and not too tall, not very thin but at the same time not a heavyweight, he was medium. So you can imagine Rasūlullāh ﷺ in front of this *huge* man. Rasūlullāh ﷺ grabbed ʻUmar by his clothes and dragged him in and put him down on his knees and told him, "O ʻUmar! When are you going to stop? Are you waiting for Allāh to strike you with a thunderbolt?!" ʻUmar Ibn Al-Khattāb said, "O Messenger of Allāh! I have come to become Muslim." Now, this happened between Rasūlullāh ﷺ and ʻUmar right next to the gate, and all of the other Sahābah were in a different room, so they did not see what was happening. When ʻUmar said that, Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "Allāhu Akbar!" All of the Sahābah knew what had happened, they realised that ʻUmar became Muslim. They were *so* happy with that news, they made a Takbeer that was so loud [that] they immediately had to disperse, because it was heard by the people of Makkah.

The Islām of ʻUmar was a turning point in the history of Islām in Makkah. ʻAbdullāh Ibn Masʻūd says, "The Islām of ʻUmar was victory, his immigration to Madīnah was help to Islām, and his reign – his Khilāfah – was mercy." ʻAbdullāh Ibn Masʻūd says, "We were never able to pray in front of Al-Kaʼbah publicly until ʻUmar became Muslim." So an Islām of one person changed the situation of all of the Muslim community; that was how valuable ʻUmar Ibn Al-Khattāb was, such a great asset. ʻAbdullāh Ibn Masʻūd also says, "We used to conceal our Islām until ʻUmar became Muslim, then we would proudly proclaim our Islām." It is mentioned in one of the narrations of Seerah that when ʻUmar became Muslim, Rasūlullāh ﷺ lined up the Muslims in two ranks; one rank was headed by Hamzah, the other rank was headed my ʻUmar, and they went down the streets of Makkah marching publicly, proclaiming their religion, while Rasūlullāh ﷺ was walking between the two ranks.

People Surround ‘Umar from Every Direction Beating Him Up

When ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb became Muslim, he asked, “Who has the biggest mouth in Makkah?” Who is the one who cannot hold water in his mouth, the one who can publicise this news? ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb did not want to take it step by step, he wanted everyone to know that I became Muslim. They told him, “Jamīl Al-Jumahī.” ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar said, “At that time I was young, but I can still remember everything I saw.” He said, “I followed my father and he went to Jamīl.” ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb said to Jamīl, “Do you know what I did?” Jamīl said, “What?” He said, “I have become Muslim.” ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar said, “Immediately, as soon as Jamīl heard the news, he stood up dragging his gown behind him – his gown was trailing – and he went running towards the mosque, Al-Ka’bah, and he went in front of everyone and started screaming to the top of his voice, ‘O PEOPLE OF QURAISH! ‘UMAR HAS BECOME A SABIAN!’” So ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb was trying to correct the announcement by saying, “No, I have become a Muslim”, but this man is not hearing anything ‘Umar is saying, he is going around publicising the news, broadcasting [it like] it was on national TV; everyone knew that ‘Umar became Muslim. ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb said, “People started flowing towards me.” Jamīl did a very good job; people were just flowing towards ‘Umar. ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar said, “So the people surrounded my father from every direction, they were beating him and he was beating them. They were fighting for hours, until the sun was right on top of their heads and it was too hot for them to continue.” And then ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb went home, and the people were surrounding his house; they wanted to kill ‘Umar, this for them was unbelievable news – ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb becoming Muslim, that is not an easy thing, so they wanted to kill him. And ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar said, “My father was at home and then a man came and asked my father, ‘What is wrong?’ ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb said, ‘These people want to kill me.’ The man said, ‘No, they will not kill you,’ and then he stood outside and said, ‘Leave the man alone, does he not have the right to choose the religion he wants to believe in? I am giving him protection.’” ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar said, “Immediately the people left.” Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar said, “And then later on I asked my father in Madīnah – I still had memories of what happened – [so] I asked my father in Madīnah, ‘Who was that man who came and helped you?’” ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb said, “O my son, that was Al-‘Aas Bin Wā‘il.” The father of ‘Amr Ibn Al-‘Aas, he was not a Muslim. The tribe of ‘Umar Ibn Al-

Khattāb was very small and they were not very strong, but their allies were the tribe of Al-'Aas Bin-Wā'il; they were the allies of Banū 'Udaÿ, the family of 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb. So he came in to help a member of his allies and he gave 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb protection.

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Lessons on the Islām of 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb ﷺ

A few notes on the story of the Islām of 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb ﷺ:

Rasūlullāh ﷺ Knew People and their Qualities

We find here one of the leadership qualities of Muhammad ﷺ; Rasūlullāh ﷺ knew the personal traits of people very well. When Rasūlullāh ﷺ made the Du'ā' – the prayer, [asking Allāh] to guide 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb or Abū Jahl, why did Rasūlullāh ﷺ choose these two people in particular? 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb and Abū Jahl had some personal traits that qualified them to be outstanding leaders in whatever areas they were in. These two men were outstanding leaders, both of them. They had personal qualities that nominated them to lead people and to manage their affairs. Abū Jahl, by the way, is not his name, that is a nickname that was given to him by the Rasūlullāh ﷺ. He used to be called by his people before that Abul Hakam, which is also not his [real] name, but it was a name given to him by his people. His original name is 'Amr Bin Hishām, but he was such a wise and intelligent man, his people called him *Abul Hakam*, which means 'Father of Wisdom' – they named him Father of Wisdom. Now, when his intelligence did not lead him to Islām, he became disqualified and he was called *Abū Jahl* – Father of Ignorance. Rasūlullāh ﷺ called him Father of Ignorance because no matter how wise a person is, if their wisdom does not lead them to the truth, it is not wisdom. No matter how intelligent they are, if their intelligence does not lead them to Islām, they have no intelligence. And that is the admission they will make on the Day of judgement. Allāh ﷻ says about the people on the Day of Judgement, when they realise they are going to Hellfire: **And they will say, "If only we had been listening or reasoning, we would not be among the companions of the Blaze."**[79] Where were our minds? Where was our intelligence?

These two men had determination, they had commitment to a cause; if they believe in something, they are willing to work for it until the end. They are relentless in pursuit of their objectives, and they are strong. And in situations of difficulty, they rise above everyone else. You would find that in every situation that was difficult, Abū Jahl would rise and would lead his people. Even though it was an evil, but he did it right. He was good in what he was doing, even though he was on the wrong path. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ wanted to win one of these men over to Islām because they would bring with them all of their resources. ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb had these personal qualities, he had sincerity; when he believed in something, he would not go in twisted rounds or turns, he would face a thing head on, and he was very courageous and brave, and Rasūlullāh ﷺ was looking at these personal qualities. You see, ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb does not have a strong tribal backing, ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb, when it comes to Islām, he will come with his personal qualities, not his family background, because his family background was not that of the noblest in Quraish, even though he did come from the core tribes of Quraish, but his tribe was not a leading tribe, nor were they many in numbers to give them such a strong presence in Makkah, but it was his personal qualities that nominated him to that Du‘ā'. And Allāh ﷻ destined that He will choose him out of these two to become the ally of Islām. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ knew the people.

Rasūlullāh’s ﷺ Deep Understanding of People and how to Cure their Diseases

The second lesson to be learned is another leadership quality that Rasūlullāh ﷺ possessed, and that was his deep understanding of the people and how to cure their diseases. Even though ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb had these excellent personal qualities, but he was suffering from a serious malice; ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb’s heart was filled with hatred towards the Muslims, so as soon as ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb became a Muslim, Rasūlullāh ﷺ knew where the disease was and how to cure it. It is narrated that Rasūlullāh ﷺ placed his hand on the chest of ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb and said, “O Allāh, cure his heart from hatred,” and he made that Du‘ā' three times. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ put his hand on the disease and cured it.

The Best of you in Jāhiliyyah are the Best of you in Islām if you Understand Religion

The third lesson is: *Khiyārukum Fil Jāhiliyyah Khiyārukum Fil Islāmi Idhā Faqihū* – The best of you in Jāhiliyyah – pre-Isalmic era, are the best of you in Islām..." Now, Rasūlullāh ﷺ did not leave this statement open, because this is not a general rule, it is not necessarily [the case] that every person who was good before Islām is going to be good after Islām. If a person was good before Islām, they had some good personal qualities, and then they become Muslim but they deviate within Islām and they do not follow the Sunnah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and they do not have good understanding of Islām, they could end up causing more harm than benefit. And there are many examples of people who had a lot of good personal qualities, but when they became Muslim they did not understand the Religion correctly, so they ended up causing a lot of detriment and harm. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ qualified the statement by saying, "*Idhā Faqihū* – if they understand." Fiqh means understating, Fiqh does not mean that you memorise rules. Now we have used the word Fiqh as a label to talk about Islāmic law, but the word Fiqh in Hadīth has a more broader meaning, it means understanding, comprehension. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ says [that] the people who have good personal qualities before they become Muslim, they would become the best among the Muslims if they understand the Religion. So there is a pre-requisite there, they have to understand the Religion.

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Quraish's Desperation and the Embargo

Terms of the Embargo

Ibn Hajar states, "When Quraish saw that some of the Believers had gone to live in a different land and were safe – the ones who were in Abyssinia – and that 'Umar has embraced Islām, they realised that Islām was beginning to rapidly catch on. They then decided that there would be no solution other than to kill the Prophet ﷺ." [So] Islām now has a branch in Abyssinia, it has a base surviving there, [and] inside Makkah they have won over Hamzah Bin 'Abdul Muttalib and 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb; things are getting out of control, now we have to get

beyond our hesitation of killing Muhammad ﷺ because of fear of the retaliation by Banū Hāshim, we have to do something. And that led them to the signing of the embargo against Muhammad ﷺ, because Quraish now officially requested Banū Hāshim to hand over Muhammad ﷺ to kill him. Obviously Banū Hāshim refused, so the result was an agreement between the various tribes of Quraish to boycott Banū Hāshim [and Banū Muttalib]. The embargo started in the month of Muharram of the seventh year after the Message began, and it was that no one would deal with them, no trade would be conducted between them, and no one would marry of them or to them, until they give up the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. So it was a commercial blockade, and also it was that no family relations are established with them; no marriage [was] to be done with them and they would accept no marriage offers coming from Banū Hāshim [and Banū Muttalib]. And they are to be surrounded in their enclave, in their neighbourhood in Makkah, and the people of Quraish wanted to ensure that no food would reach to Banū Hāshim and Banū Muttalib. Again, this was not only to Banū Hāshim, but it included Banū Muttalib, and Al-Muttalib had a very close relationship with their brethren from Banū Hāshim and they stood with them in that difficult moment. And by the way, Al-Imām Ash-Shāfi'ī is a descendant of Banū Muttalib, so he is close to Rasūlullāh ﷺ.

The Suffering of Banū Hāshim and Banū Muttalib

So the people of Quraish came together and they signed this agreement, the embargo, and they posted the document inside Al-Ka'bah. Things became quite severe, Banū Hāshim and Banū Muttalib were suffering hunger, and it is reported by Sa'd Ibn Abī Waqqās, "We were so hungry that we used to eat leaves of trees." We would go to the trees and just grab the leaves and eat them, that is how hungry we were. And these were Mushrikīn by the way, Banū Hāshim and Banū Muttalib, many of them were Non-Muslims, and they went through all of this; why? Because they refused to hand over Muhammad ﷺ. So the embargo included the Muslims and Non-Muslims of Banū Hāshim [and Banū Muttalib], all of them were included in it, because they refused to hand over the Messenger of Allāh Muhammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him.

Two or three years passed, and Hishām Bin Al-Hārith, who was the most enthusiastic in refusing the terms of the embargo – he was a relative to Banū Hāshim from his maternal side – what he used to do during those two or three years was that he would load a camel with food, and he would take it on top of the hill that was overlooking the enclave of Banū Hāshim, and then he would hit the camel and set it free and release it so it would go down the hill and end up among Banū Hāshim, and he would do that secretly, obviously. So he was the one who used to sneak in food to the people of Banū Hāshim and Banū Muttalib. Obviously Hishām Bin Al-Hārith was not included in the embargo because he was not himself from Banū Hāshim or Banū Muttalib, but he had some relationship with them through his mother's side.

Hishām Bin Al-Hārith – One Man's Determination to End the Embargo

Hishām Bin Al-Hārith went to Zuhair Ibn Abī Umayyah, and he told Zuhair, "Does it please you that you are eating well and dressing well while your own uncles are in that situation of distress? On my part I swear that if these people were the uncles of Abul Hakam, he would not have done so." Zuhair Ibn Abī Umayyah was also a relative of Banū Hāshim, they were his relatives from the mother's side. Hishām is telling Zuhair [that] how can you accept to see your uncles going through that misery and you do nothing, and the one who is calling us to do this is Abul Hakam – Abū Jahl? Now, if these were his uncles, he would not have treated them that way, [so] how come we have to go along with this? You know, it is just like America is asking the Muslim countries to boycott such and such Muslim country, but then if the same thing was done by Israel, America would never ask for an embargo on them. Imagine if Israel has done similar to what 'Irāq has done – and by the way they have done more already – but will America ever call for an embargo against Isrā'īl? Never. So there is a double standard, and Hishām Bin Al-Hārith was saying [that] Abū Jahl is calling us to boycott our uncles, and he would never do the same to his. Because obviously Abū Jahl was the spearhead of all of these efforts, you would always find Abū Jahl in these places.

Zuhair Ibn Abī Umayyah responded and said, "Shame on you Hishām. Who am I but one man, what can I do? In the name of Allāh, if I had another person

beside me, I would go about abrogating that document." Hishām said, "Well, there is a person with you." He asked, "Who is it?" [Hishām said,] "Myself, I am going to be with you." Zuhair said, "Then find us a third person." Hishām set off to find a third person; he went to Al-Mut'am Bin Udaÿ. He told Al-Mut'am Bin Udaÿ, "Mut'am, are you pleased to have two clans of Banū 'Abd Manāf suffer while you look on in agreement with Quraish about that? By God, if you enable them to do this, they will soon be treating you the same way." If we allow this precedence to be set, it could backfire and one day it could happen to you or me. Al-Mut'am said, "Well, what am I able to do? I am just one person." Hishām said, "No, you are not one person, there is a second person with you." [He asked,] "Who is it?" [He said,] "Myself." Al-Mut'am said, "How about you find us a third person?" [He said,] "I did." [He asked,] "Who is it?" [He said,] "Zuhair Ibn Abī Umayyah." Al Mut'am said, "Find us a fourth." Hishām went to Abul Bukhtarī and presented to him the same thing, and Abul Bukhtarī said, "Well, we need more people." He said, "We are now four." He said, "Go and find us a fifth." Hishām went; he is doing something, he is working, he is lobbying against this oppression of Quraish. So he went and got a fifth person who was Zam'ah Bin Al-Aswad. Now they decided that they are going to go and meet at night in Al-Hujūn, so they all met together in Al-Hujūn, and the agreement was that tomorrow morning we were going to set about destroying this document, but we were going to make it seem as if it was spontaneous.

So next day in the morning, Zuhair Ibn Abī Umayyah goes in with special clothes, a ceremonial gown that he had on, and he made Tawāf, and that was the time in which the assembly of Quraish meet, and their meeting place was in An-Nadwah close by to Al-Ka'bah. So Zuhair Ibn Abī Umayyah is wearing those special clothes and he made Tawāf and then he came and stood right above the assembly of Quraish, and he told them, "O people of Quraish! Does it please you to eat well, and to dress at will, while Banū Hāshim and Banū Muttalib are going through distress? I swear in the name of Allāh that I am not going to take a seat unless that document is torn apart!" Now a second person from the five stood up, as if it was spontaneous, as if they did not coordinate this among themselves, and said, "Yes! I never agreed to that document from the day it was written." And now a third person stood up and said, "I swear that I have nothing to do with such a document and I do not want to be part of such an agreement."

And the fourth person stood up, and then finally Hishām himself gave some comments. Now, Abū Jahl stood up and he said, "*Hādhā Amrun Dubbira Bi-Layl* – This is something that you planned at night." Do not tell me that it was spontaneous, you planned this aforehand. But it was too late, things were already getting out of control, and Al-Mut'am Bin Udaÿ went into Al-Ka'bah to tear down the document, and Subhān'Allāh, he goes in and he finds that the document has already been eaten up my termites with the exception of two words; *Bismisk Allāhum* - In the name of our Lord. Everything else was eaten, all of the oppression of the document was eaten, with the exception of the opening words, *Bismik Allāhum* – In the name of Allāh.

So the embargo was ended after two or three years.

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Lessons

Two lessons to learn from this:

Lesson One: The Difference the People Can Make

Number One: You saw here that five people can make a difference; the whole embargo was abrogated due to the efforts of five people. Actually, it [was] all started by Hishām Bin Al-Hārith alone, it started as an idea in the mind of this man and he set about to implement it, and he recruited a few people around him, and he brought an end to this corrupt agreement – the agreement of oppression. So this shows us the value of organisation; five people came together and had an organised plan and they were able to bring an end to the embargo. So this is the value of working together, this is the value of having organised work. And then it shows you that a person needs to take some action; Hishām went to the first person, the first person gave him a pessimistic view, he said, 'I am only one person, what can I do?' Hishām said, 'Well, you have a second person with you,' he said, 'Find a third,' Hishām set about to find a third. He was a man of action, and he was able to recruit five people and they made a difference.

Brother and sisters, this Religion needs action, and even though these were Kuffār, these were Mushrikīn, but there is a valuable lesson to learn from this,

that you need to take the first step, you need to do some action. And when Rasūlullāh ﷺ was first given the *Risālah* – you see, there is one opinion of scholars that Muhammad ﷺ became a Prophet when he received the revelation of *Iqra'*, and he became a Rasūl when he was given the revelation of *Qum Fa'andhir*; that is one view that some scholars hold, because there is a difference between Nabï and Rasūl. Nabï, which is translated as Prophet, is someone who is receiving Revelation from Allāh, but it does not necessarily mean that it is a mandate on them to propagate the Message. However a Rasūl, which is translated as Messenger, is a Nabï who is commanded by Allāh to propagate the Message. Rasūlullāh ﷺ received the Revelation in the verses of *Iqra'*, so he then became Nabï. And then the Revelation stopped for a while, and he was not conveying the Message at that time, he was not given the command yet by Allāh ﷻ to propagate the Message, until he was given the revelation of *Qum Fa'andhir* – Stand up and warn; that is when he became a Rasūl according to the opinion of some scholars. So you can notice that the first commands Allāh ﷻ gave to Muhammad ﷺ which made him a Rasūl were the commands of "Stand up". Stand up! Rasūlullāh ﷺ was wrapped in his garments; Allāh ﷻ said that you have to stand up, you cannot be sitting down, you cannot be lying on your bed, you have to stand up. This Religion needs men and women to stand up and take action – *Qum Fa'andhir*. So the Muslim is standing up, and even when the Muslim is sitting down or lying down, they are not relieved of their duties. ***Alladhīna Yadhkurūnallāha Qiyāman Wa Qu'ūdan Wa 'Alā Junūbihim* – [Those] who remember Allāh while standing or sitting or [lying] on their sides.**[80] You are never relieved; as a Muslim you are continuously doing something. So we need to take action, and 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb used to make this Du'ā' and say, "O Allāh, I seek refuge in You from the strong Disbeliever and the weak Believer." The Believer should be strong, and unless we stand up and go ahead and do something, things will not change. We cannot expect our problems to be solved by some supernatural force. From the time of Mūsā and on, Allāh ﷻ has not punished a nation through a supernatural event. For example, with the people of Sālih, they were destroyed by the thunderbolt, with the people of 'Ād, they were destroyed through the tornado, with the people of Lūt, Allāh ﷻ made the Earth sink, but from Mūsā and onward, Allāh ﷻ has brought about change through the hands of the Believers. Allāh ﷻ prescribed Jihād on the Ummah of Mūsā, they were the first

Ummah to wage Jihād, it was the Ummah of Mūsā. Before that, the Ambiyā' did not fight, but from Mūsā and onward, Allāh ﷻ would punish the Non-Believers through the armies of *Al-Mu'mineen* – the Believers.

Lesson Two: Miracles

First Miracle: Document being Eaten Up by Termites

Second Lesson: The miracle of the document being eaten up by termites, and this brings up again the issue of the soldiers of Allāh. ***Wamā Ya'lamu Junūda Rabbika Illā Hū* – And none knows the soldiers of your Lord except Him.**[81] Who would imagine that termites would be a soldier for Allāh? So this is a miracle that happened at the time of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, you can add it to the many other miracles that occurred on the hands of Muhammad ﷺ.

Second Miracle: Strength of Rasūlullāh ﷺ

Another incident that [we] can classify as a miracle is the wrestling of Rasūlullāh ﷺ with Rukānah. Rukānah was the strongest wrestler in Makkah, Rukānah had never ever lost a wrestling match, and he was a Non-Believer. He came to Muhammad ﷺ and he said, "Would you challenge me?" Rasūlullāh ﷺ amazingly accepted the challenge. It seems that Rukānah had done this with the most evil of intentions; he wanted to humiliate Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Being a Kāfir, he wants to get a chance to lay his hands on Muhammad ﷺ, [but] he did not know the surprise that was awaiting him. They started to fight, and Rasūlullāh ﷺ was able to turn Rukānah upside down and throw him on the ground. Rukānah could not believe what had happened, he stood up again and he tried to fight another time; Rasūlullāh ﷺ did it a second time. And then Rukānah tried a third time and he lost; for three times in a row. Rukānah then said, "Muhammad, no one has ever put my back on the ground before you, and no one was more hateful in my sight before this than you, but now I testify that there is no God but Allāh, and that you are the Messenger of Allāh." By the way, the deal was that whoever wins gets a hundred sheep, so this was a bet, this was before betting was made *Harām*; after that betting was made Harām, but at that time it was allowed. So the agreement was that whoever wins gets a hundred sheep, so Rasūlullāh ﷺ got the hundred sheep, but then he gave them back to Rukānah and said, "Take the sheep." Rasūlullāh ﷺ was able to win three times against

Rukānah and that shows to us the strength that Rasūlullāh ﷺ had, Rasūlullāh ﷺ had the strength of thirty men. This is a second miracle

Third Miracle: Splitting of the Moon

Third miracle: The people of Quraish were continuously asking for a sign; show us a sign, as if Qurān was not sufficient, even though Qurān is the greatest miracle of any Nabï. They were asking for a sign so Allāh ﷻ revealed to Muhammad ﷺ through Jibrīl, "If they are asking for a sign, We will split for them the moon." The moon will be split, and the time was set. Rasūlullāh ﷺ called the Non-Believers and said, "The moon will be split." And the Non-Believers gathered at night, and there right in front of them they saw the moon split into two halves, and then it came back together. This is a *very* unique miracle, and it is firmly established in Ahādīth in Bukhārī and Muslim, and in Qurān. Bukhārī mentions that the splitting of the moon came between the embracing of Islām of 'Umar and after the migration to Abyssinia. And in Sahīh Al-Muslim it states that the Makkan people requested Allāh's Apostle to show them a miracle, and so he showed them the splitting of the moon. Again in Muslim another Hadīth, this Hadīth has been transmitted on the authority of 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd who said, "We were alone with Allāh's Messenger, may peace be upon him, at Minā'. The moon was split up into two; one of its parts was behind the mountain and the other one was on this side of the mountain. Allāh's Messenger, may peace be upon him, said to us, 'Bear witness to this.'"

Allāh ﷻ says: **The Hour has come near, and the moon has split [in two]. And if they see a miracle, they turn away and say, "Passing magic."**[82] When they saw the sign of Allāh, what did they say? They said he cast magic on our eyes; they accused Muhammad ﷺ of performing magic. This was not an optical illusion, we would say that the moon actually did split up. And there are some doubts that could be brought up to attack the claim of the Muslims that Allāh has split the moon as a miracle for Muhammad ﷺ, some arguments could be presented [such as] if the moon was split how come no one [apart from the few] saw it? How come other people in other parts of the world did not see it? Well, to respond to that, number one; the world is in different time zones, so half of the world is day time, so you cross out half of the world automatically. And then within the other half, it could be very late for some people so they would not see it, or it could be that the moon is not apparent to them in their particular area

because it has already set, or because of overcast weather. So that would eliminate parts of the half of the world which is night. So we have eliminated now most of the world. Now, with the part of the world that had a chance to see the moon – because when the moon was apparent in Makkah, it would have already set in other parts of the world. – So with the other parts of the world that can see the moon, usually you do not find people running around at night staring at the sky, right?! And people tend to ignore what is going on above them unless they are told to look up. So the moon could have split but people did not see it, because they were not attuned to the fact that it would split. So that eliminates some other people [and it would be a second response]. And the third response would be that in those days documentation was weak. In many parts of the world the people were illiterate, and where people were literate, they did not document everything that would happen. So you could easily have important events of history going down the hills of history without anybody caring to write them down. So that would eliminate the possibility of some people seeing it but the news not being reported to us. Having said that, there are some scholars who say that this event was documented in India and China. And they say that there are some old writings in China that say that this particular event happened in the year when the moon split, and they use that as a reference point for them to document history. And one needs to do more research to take a look at the original documents that mention this.

So it is firmly established that this event did happen. I am mentioning this without basing a lot or counting on it until more research is done; it is mentioned by some astronomers, and again this information needs to be verified, that there is what appears to be a long divide that goes around the moon. Satellites are [sort of] able to detect continental rifts, so there is such a rift that is going around the moon. If that is true, then that is a clear sign to prove the splitting of the moon. But again, that is something that needs to be verified. I have heard it from more than one source, but again, I would not count on it until it is firmly established.

Al-Khattābi, one of the classical scholars, says, “The splitting of the moon was a great sign that cannot even be compared to signs given to prior Messengers. This is because it was witnessed in the vastness of the universe and traversing beyond the laws of nature. With this, the confirmation of the Prophet’s ﷺ

Message was by preponderance." What Al-Khattābi is saying is that no miracle was greater than this, because this was a miracle that happened in Earth and in the Heavens, while every other miracle of other Prophets happened on Earth, was limited to Earth, but this was a sign that was both for the Heavens and the Earth. Wallāhu A'lam.

Fourth Miracle: Āyāt Predicting Victory of the Romans

There was continuous rivalry between the Roman and the Persian Empires, they were always at each other's necks, and these were the two superpowers of the world. Persia used to rule present day Irān, part of 'Irāq, Afghānistan, maybe parts of Pākistān, and they went up north, so it was a huge empire. The Byzantine Empire included Turkey and parts of Eastern Europe and Azerbaijan, Armenia and those areas. So these were the two superpowers of the world at that time, and they were having constant warfare among themselves. In one critical battle, the Persians defeated the Romans. The Pagans of Makkah were very happy, and the Muslims were sad at this outcome. Why is that? The reason is because the Pagans felt more close to the Persians because the Persians were worshippers of fire, so they are Mushrikīn like them, therefore the Mushrikīn of Makkah were happy when the Pagans won, while the Muslims[83] were on the side of the Romans because the Romans were Christian – People of the Book – who are closer to the Muslims. So the Muslims were siding with the Romans while the Pagans of Makkah were siding with the Persians. Now the Persians won, so the Non-Believers of Makkah are going around telling the Muslims, "Just like the Persians defeated the Romans, we are going to defeat you." Pagans are winning. Allāh ﷻ revealed the verse: **Alif, Lām, Meem. The Byzantines have been defeated. In the nearest land. But they, after their defeat, will overcome. Within three to nine years. To Allāh belongs the command before and after. And that day the Believers will rejoice. In the victory of Allāh. He gives victory to whom He wills, and He is the Exalted in Might, the Merciful.**[84] Allāh ﷻ says that the Romans have been defeated, but they will be victorious *Fī Bid'i Sinīn*; Bid'i Sinīn means less than ten. Allāh ﷻ is here promising that the Romans will win within ten years. Abū Bakr learned of these verses and he went to Abū Jahl and he said, "I want to bet you that the Romans will win." Abū Jahl said, "Give me a timeframe," he said, "Less than ten years," and they had a bet on one hundred camels. Abū Bakr, obviously

believing in the Āyāt of Qurān, was willing to bet whatever number Abū Jahl would offer. And Abū Jahl was willing to enter into this bet because it seemed that the Persians are going to roll over the Romans and wipe them out. According to the news of the day, it appeared that the Persians were rolling on and nothing will stop them; they were winning and they were doing so well that to it appears to the outsiders that the Romans have no hope. The Persians, they got their act together and now they are attacking and they are winning one battle after another. The first year passed, second year, third year. Now, Allāh ﷻ says in that verse: **And that day the Believers will rejoice. In the victory of Allāh.** The day the Romans win, the Believers will be joyful, happy, pleased, due to the victory of Allāh. What do you understand from this verse? The understanding that you get is that the Romans will win and the Muslims will be happy because Allāh gave them victory, right? What you understand from this verse is that the Romans will win and the Muslims will be happy when that happens; **And that day the Believers will rejoice.** Eight years passed, and the Romans won, and the news reached to the Muslims, Now, the Muslims who were so enthusiastic in their support of the Romans and really wanted them to win, and Abū Bakr went and had a bet, a challenge with Abū Jahl, when the news of the victory of the Romans reached the Muslims, they did not really care much about it. How come? Allāh ﷻ says: **And that day the Believers will rejoice.** And now they received the news but the news is secondary to them. What is the reason? Subhān'Allāh, because the day they received the news was the day they won the Battle of Badr. So the Battle of Badr and the news of the Muslims winning overshadowed everything else, and that was the true rejoicement of the Believers, that was the true happiness in the decisive victory of the Muslims against the Disbelievers. Early on when the bet happened and when these verses were revealed, the Muslims were watchers, they were not the major players in history, they were following the news of what is happening in the world around them, but when the news of the Romans reached them, they were the major players then; now the Muslims were the ones who were fighting the Kuffār and they are going to win against the Kuffār, because you see, you [have to] remember the whole thing; in Makkah this happened because the Mushrikīn were telling the Believers that when the Persians win that is a sign that we will win against you, and Subhān'Allāh, the opposite happened, the

Romans won against the Pagan worshippers of Persia, and on the same day the Muslims won against the Pagans of Makkah.

But the miracle does not end there, there is another miracle in this Āyah which falls under the category of scientific miracles of Qurān. The word that was used in the Āyah is *Adnal Ard.* **[The Byzantines have been defeated. In the nearest land.]** 'Adnā' has two meanings in Arabic; one is the nearest, and the other one is the lowest. Nearest – this was the meaning that was adopted by the early scholars because the nearest land to the land of the Arabs was Ash-Shām; Syria and Falastīn. So that was how they interpreted it. But now, in light of science, we have a new understanding of this verse, because it turns out that the battlefield where the battle occurred, next to the Dead Sea, is the lowest point on the face of the Earth, it is over four hundred feet below sea level. So that is another miracle mentioned in this Āyah.

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12

The Later Years Of Makkah

Abū Tālib Dies

A few months after the end of the embargo, about six months later, the man who has supported the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, was now on his deathbed leaving this world. Abū Tālib was dying and Muhammad ﷺ was on his side, and the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ told his uncle, "Yā 'Amm – O Uncle, say Lā Ilāha Illallāh. Say that there is no God but Allāh. Give me this word so that I can witness for you on the Day of Judgement. Give me something in my hand so that I could argue on your behalf on the Day of Judgment. All what I want from you is to say Lā Ilāha Illallāh." Sitting on the other side was who? Abū Jahl. Subhān'Allāh, it is amazing, wherever you go in Seerah you would find this man in front of you causing problems, leading in evil; *wherever* you go in Seerah you will have Abū Jahl standing there right in front of you. He

was relentless in his efforts to fight Rasūlullāh ﷺ, he did not give up until the last moment. Abū Jahl and ‘Abdullāh Ibn Abī Umayyah were sitting on the other side, Abū Jahl interjected and said, “O Abū Tālib, are you going to die on a religion other than the religion of ‘Abdul Muttalib? Are you going to denounce the religion of your father?” Rasūlullāh ﷺ repeated again, “O my uncle, say Lā Ilāha Illallāh,” and Abū Jahl continued interrupting. And then it went on until Abū Tālib pronounced his last words, he said, “*Bal ‘Alā Millat ‘Abdul Muttalib* – I am dying on the religion of my father ‘Abdul Muttalib.” Those were his last words. This narration by the way that I mentioned to you is in Al-Bukhārī, there is another narration in Al-Muslim, but let us first finish this narration in Al-Bukhārī. So Abū Tālib passed away. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, “I am going to continue asking Allāh to forgive him unless I am forbidden from doing so. I am going to keep on asking Allāh to forgive my uncle.” You know, that was a very very difficult moment on Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Remember, Abū Tālib was the one who raised up Muhammad ﷺ, he sponsored him, he took care of him at the age of eight, so he was the one caring for him in his childhood, and then he was the one who stood beside him in his adulthood. And Abū Tālib was supporting, defending, protecting Muhammad ﷺ for over forty two years; it started at the age of eight, and it went on until Rasūlullāh ﷺ was at the age of fifty. So we can say that Abū Tālib has given most of his life, spent most of his time, in defence of Muhammad ﷺ. So it was an extremely difficult time for Muhammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, to see that his dear uncle is dying as a Disbeliever. So Muhammad ﷺ said I am going to ask Allāh to forgive him, and he asked Allāh to forgive him until Allāh revealed the verse: **It is not for the Prophet and those who have believed to ask forgiveness for the Polytheists, even if they were relatives, after it has become clear to them that they are Companions of Hellfire.**[85] It is not allowed for you to seek forgiveness for somebody who died on Disbelief. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ was forbidden from doing that.

In this narration by Muslim, Rasūlullāh ﷺ was telling his uncle to say Lā Ilāha Illallāh, his uncle responded by saying, “If it were not for Quraish insulting me and saying that it was only fear of death that made me say it, I would do so and please you.” Abū Tālib knew that it would please Muhammad ﷺ, he knew how much it would hurt the Messenger of Allāh to know that his uncle died as a Disbeliever. So Abū Tālib, Subhān'Allāh, he was even sympathetic to

Muhammad ﷺ in this case, he said I would have said it just to please you, but I do not want the news to get out to the people of Quraish that I did it out of fear of dying. It was a matter of honour and dignity for him not to say it, and that is when Allāh ﷻ revealed the verse**: Indeed, [O Muhammad], you do not guide whom you like, but Allāh guides whom He wills.**[86] So guidance is not in the hand of anyone except Allāh ﷻ. Even with the Prophet of Allāh, his mission is to convey the Message and not to convert, converting the heart of a person is in the Hands of Allāh, not in the hands of people. And therefore in Islām, coercion in Faith is not allowed – ***Lā Ikrāha Fiddīn*** **– There shall be no compulsion in [acceptance of] the Religion.**[87] – because this is something beyond our ability; you cannot coerce something on a heart of a person. So it should be a matter of choice by people; they have the freedom to choose their faith, and that is how they would be held accountable in front of Allāh ﷻ, it is because [of] that freedom that they have.

Khadījah رضي الله عنها Passes Away

So now Rasūlullāh ﷺ is dealing with this tragic event that happened to him. Two months later, Khadījah رضي الله عنها died. Rasūlullāh ﷺ is still dealing with the death of his uncle and here his dear wife, the most beloved person to him, passes away. This year was called '*Āmil Huzn* – The Year of Sorrow, and this was the tenth year after Rasūlullāh ﷺ received Revelation. It was the most tragic time on Muhammad ﷺ because he lost two of the most influential persons in supporting his Message; Khadījah رضي الله عنها who offered Rasūlullāh ﷺ with psychological support in addition to financial support due to her business, and Abū Tālib who offered Muhammad ﷺ with physical support. So suddenly these two pillars which he was standing on collapsed. So this year is not called the Year of Tragedy – the Year of Sorrow, just because Rasūlullāh ﷺ lost two dear people, but also because it was such a setback to the preaching of the Message. Rasūlullāh ﷺ, who had freedom in going around preaching the Message, was now being blocked because his uncle passed away, and Rasūlullāh ﷺ, who would go home to find comfort with his wife Khadījah, would now go home and find no one; Rasūlullāh ﷺ remained for about two or three years unmarried. So it was a very difficult time for Muhammad ﷺ.

Some scholars would say that there was wisdom in this happening at the same time, and that was to increase the dependence of Muslims on Allāh. So rather than the Message being protected by Abū Tālib and supported by Khadījah, now there would be more reliance on Allāh ﷻ because there was no one else; no one around Rasūlullāh ﷺ to give him that same support. So this would increase the *Tawwakul* – the trust, the Muslims have in Allāh ﷻ; this is a comment that was given by some of the scholars. Allāh ﷻ revealed a Sūrah called Al-Inshirāh, and in that Sūrah it says: ***Inna Ma'al 'Usri Yusrā* – For indeed, with hardship [will be] ease.**[88] Rasūlullāh ﷺ went through his most tragic time in his life, so it was followed with one of the best blessings given to him by Allāh. Because of the size of the calamity, the bounty that followed it was great.

Al-Isrā' Wal-Mi'rāj

Rasūlullāh ﷺ Flies on Al-Burāq

Rasūlullāh ﷺ narrates – and this Hadīth is in Bukhārī; similar narrations are in Muslim and Musnad Al-Imām Ahmad, in most of the books of Hadīth these narrations exist – Rasūlullāh ﷺ says, "While I was in Al-Hatīm or Al-Hijr," and this is the semi-circle area close to Al-Ka'bah which is part of the original building of Al-Ka'bah, Rasūlullāh ﷺ says he was there at night, the Messenger of Allāh said, "I received a visitor, an angel, who came and opened my abdomen and pulled out my heart. And then my heart was placed in a golden basin filled with Faith – Īmān. And my heart was placed in it and washed, and then stuffed and replaced. And then I was presented an animal smaller than a horse, larger than a donkey." Anas Ibn Mālik was narrating this Hadīth and his student, one of At-Tābi'īn, Al-Jārūth, asked Anas Ibn Mālik, "Is this animal Al-Burāq?" Anas Ibn Mālik said, "Yes." Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "This animal would take a stride as far as it can see." So the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ is trying to describe to us the speed of this animal, and Rasūlullāh ﷺ described it as [such] that this animal would place its hoofs at the extent of its side, it would take a stride as far as it can see. With one leap, it would wrap the distance equivalent to the distance it could see or look forward. So it was an *extremely* fast beast, very fast, swift; you just see the Earth wrapping in front of you. [Rasūlullāh ﷺ continues,] "Jibrīl told me to mount this animal and then he would guide me." Rasūlullāh ﷺ says in another Hadīth, and this Hadīth is in Al-Muslim, this

portion was not mentioned in the Hadīth of Al-Bukhārī; you have bits and pieces of Al-Isrā' Wal-Mi'rāj mentioned in different Ahādīth, in Muslim Rasūlullāh ﷺ says, "Jibrīl took me to Jerusalem and I tied my mount at the gates of the masjid, and then I entered and prayed two Rak'ah." And it states that Rasūlullāh ﷺ was an Imām and the people who were following him were the Prophets.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ Visits the Seven Heavens

Rasūlullāh ﷺ Meets Ādam ﷺ

And then Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "I was led by Jibrīl up in the heavens. We made it all the way to the gates of the nearest heaven. Jibrīl knocked on the gates, so the gatekeepers asked, 'Who is it?' Jibrīl said, 'It is Jibrīl.' 'And who is with you?' 'Muhammad.' 'Was he given his mission?' Jibrīl said, 'Yes.' They responded by saying, 'He is welcome, and his arrival is a pleasure!' And they opened the gates." So you can see that no one can make it through unless they have permission, they have clearance. Jibrīl, being the Angel of Allāh who is going up and down the heavens with Al-Wahī, told them I am Jibrīl; so you can go through. Who is with you? Muhammad ﷺ. Was he already given the mission? So they did not know yet that Muhammad ﷺ was already a prophet; when they were informed, immediately they opened the gates and said, 'He is welcome, and his arrival is a pleasure!' We are happy that he is here. They opened the gates and Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "I went in, and I found therein my father Ādam ﷺ ." The Messenger of Allāh said, "Jibrīl introduced me to Ādam and said, 'This is your father Ādam, greet him.' So I said, 'Assalāmu 'Alaikum'. Ādam saluted me in return and said, 'Wa 'Alaikumus-Salām.' And then Ādam ﷺ said, 'Welcome to my pure son, welcome to the pure Prophet.'"

When I think of this meeting, I try to imagine the pleasure and happiness that both the Prophets had. You know, imagine Ādam ﷺ is meeting the brightest and greatest of his children, Muhammad ﷺ, he is meeting him for the first time. After thousands of years, now Ādam ﷺ has a chance to meet his greatest son. And imagine the surprise of Muhammad ﷺ to meet his father Ādam, imagine you have Ādam in front of you and you are greeting him; it must have been such a pleasurable moment, and they might have wished to sit down together and

have a conversation, but remember that Muhammad ﷺ in this journey is on a tight schedule, he has a *lot* waiting ahead of him.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ Meets ʻĪsā, Yahyā, Yūsuf, Idrīs, Hārūn and Mūsā عليهم السلام

So Jibrīl carried Muhammad ﷺ and they went up to the gates of the second heaven. They knocked [on the gates and] same thing, they were asked [who it was. He said,] "Jibrīl," "Who is with you?" "Muhammad ﷺ," "Is he a Nabï? Has he been given Ar-Risālah?" They opened the gates [and] Muhammad ﷺ says, "I went in and I met Jesus and John," the two cousins, ʻĪsā and Yahyā. Yahyā is referred to in the Christian literature as John the Baptist. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "And I exchanged greetings with them." And what are the greetings of Islām and the Ambiyā'? Assalāmu ʻAlaikum – Peace be upon you; that is the greeting. "And then we moved ahead to the third heaven, knocked on the gates, went through, and I met with Joseph, Yūsuf عليه السلام." Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "*Wa Idhā Bihī Ūtiya Shatral Husn* – He has been given half of beauty." So if you had a big block of beauty, half of it was with Yūsuf عليه السلام. "We made it to the fourth heaven, went through, and I met with Idrīs عليه السلام." And Allāh ﷻ says [about him]: ***Wa Rafa'nāhu Makānan ʻAliyyā* – And We raised him to a high station.**[89] He was in the fourth heaven. [Rasūlullāh ﷺ continues,] "We went to the fifth heaven, and therein I met with Hārūn – Aaron, peace be upon him. And then I went to the sixth heaven, and I met Mūsā عليه السلام." And his meeting with Mūsā was an eventful meeting. Subhān'Allāh, always Mūsā is surrounded with important events. One of the scholars said, "Qurān was almost going to be the story of Mūsā." He is mentioned so frequently therein, and his personality is so outstanding. Whenever the name of Mūsā عليه السلام is mentioned, there is something important that is going to happen. After they greeted each other and Mūsā welcomed Muhammad ﷺ, Mūsā started to weep. When he was asked, "How come you are weeping?" He said, "A young man was given Prophethood after me, and he will have more of his followers entering Paradise than mine." Up until that moment, Mūsā had the largest following of any Prophet; the Children of Israel were the largest believing nation up until that point, but now there was a new world record by the Ummah of the Muhammad ﷺ. So Mūsā wept, he cried. And you can see that there is competition between the Prophets, peace be upon them all, but you will notice that it is not a competition of jealousy and

envy, it is a compassionate competition, and you will see that in the upcoming conversation between Muhammad ﷺ and Mūsā ﷺ.

Ibrāhīm ﷺ and Al-Bait Al-Ma'mūr

Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "And I moved up to the seventh heaven and I went in and I met my father Ibrāhīm ﷺ and I exchanged Salām with him. And then I was presented with *Al-Bait Al-Ma'mūr*." And in one narration it states that Ibrāhīm actually had his back kneeling towards Al-Bait Al-Ma'mūr. What is Al-Bait Al-Ma'mūr? Al-Bait Al-Ma'mūr has been mentioned in Qurān: **By the mount. And [by] a Book inscribed. In parchment spread open. And [by] the frequented House.**[90] Allāh ﷻ is making an oath in the Established House – Al-Bait Al-Ma'mūr. Al-Bait Al-Ma'mūr to the creation of the heavens is equivalent to Al-Ka'bah to us. Just as we make Tawāf around Al-Ka'bah, and it is the first House on Earth established for the worship of Allāh, the same thing is to be said about Al-Bait Al-Ma'mūr. So you as Muslims will visit Al-Ka'bah; angels will visit Al-Bait Al-Ma'mūr. Rasūlullāh ﷺ says, "Al-Bait Al-Ma'mūr is visited by seventy thousand angels every day and they never come back to it again." Do you understand the implications of that? When Rasūlullāh ﷺ says that every day a new group of seventy thousand angels would visit the Established House, how many angels are there? If on a daily basis you have seventy thousand angels visiting it, and they never come back again, how many angels are there? And for how long has this been going on? For how many thousands or millions or billions of years? So you multiply all of those days by seventy thousand; how many angels are there? It puts us human beings to shame. We are saying that we have overpopulation on the Earth [with] six billion of us; who are we compared to the world of the angels, this massive creation? Rasūlullāh ﷺ says, "The heavens above you are moaning, and they are justified to moan, because on every space equivalent to the size of four fingers, there is an angel bowing down in Rukū' or prostrating in Sujūd, worshipping Allāh ﷻ." All over the heavens above us, every position, every area or volume equivalent to the size of four fingers, is occupied by an angel worshipping Allāh, so this is a vast, *huge* creation that makes us, the world of the human being, seem insignificant. And by the way, in the narration that states that Ibrāhīm ﷺ was kneeling towards Al-Bait Al-Ma'mūr, it is symbolic to have Ibrāhīm ﷺ in that position after he passed away, sitting next to Al-Bait Al-Ma'mūr, because he was the one who

built Al-Ka'bah on Earth. So when Allāh took his soul away, Allāh ﷻ had him rest next to Al-Bait Al-Ma'mūr, the House of the Angels.

Sidrat Al-Muntahā

And then Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "I saw *Sidrat Al-Muntahā*, I travelled further and I reached Sidrat Al-Muntahā." Sidrat Al-Muntahā is a lote tree, it is a tree, but it is Al-Muntahā. Al-Muntahā is the end, so it is the end of the heavens. Beyond that, you get into the world of the Afterlife; you have Paradise, you have the Throne of Allāh, you have *Al-Kursī*, so Sidrat Al-Muntahā is the end of this universe created by Allāh ﷻ. You have seven heavens, one over the other, and then after that you have Sidrat Al-Muntahā, and then you get beyond that into a different world. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ reached to that *Sidrah*, and Rasūlullāh saw four rivers emanating from it, and he asked Jibrīl, "What are these rivers?" So he was told, "Two of them are apparent and two of them are hidden. The apparent ones are the Nile and Euphrates, and the hidden ones are the two rivers of Paradise." What it means by the Nile and the Euphrates is that because these rivers are so blessed in this world, there is an equivalent of them up there, and that tree is so close to Paradise that you have two rivers of Paradise passing from under it. So again, you have the seven heavens one over another, and then after that you have Al-Bait Al-Ma'mūr which is in the seventh heaven, and then after that you have Sidrat Al-Muntahā, and then beyond that you get into the world of Paradise and the Throne of Allāh ﷻ. Now, in terms of size, the lowest heaven which we are in, compared to the heaven above it, is like a ring in a desert, and the second compared to the third is like a ring in a desert, and the third to the fourth is like a ring in a desert, and on and on [it goes] until we get to the sixth [which] compared to the seventh is like a ring in a desert, and then the seventh heaven compared to the Kursī of Allāh, is like a ring in a desert. Now, this lowest heaven that we are living in, in terms of size, we do not even know how vast it is. All of the known universe today is within the lowest heaven, because Allāh ﷻ says: **Indeed, We have adorned the nearest heaven with an adornment of stars.**[91] So all of the stars are located within the lowest heaven, and we have not even been able to reach to the end of the creation of the stars; every now and then we are discovering new galaxies and new clusters and new stars. So it is a *vast* creation, and Rasūlullāh ﷺ had a chance to go through all of it on that amazing journey.

Allāh ﷻ Prescribes Prayers on Muhammad ﷺ

After Rasūlullāh ﷺ passed the Sidrat Al-Muntahā, this tree, he went further up and he made it all the way until he met with Allāh ﷻ, and that was the culmination of this trip; he reaches to the heights and he speaks to Allāh ﷻ, directly. Allāh ﷻ prescribed Muhammad ﷺ fifty daily Prayers. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said "I descended, and on my way back I passed by Moses, Mūsā ﷺ, who asked me, 'What did Allāh tell you?'" He said, "Allāh has prescribed fifty daily Prayers on my nation." Mūsā ﷺ said, "Your people will not be able to handle that. I have tested people before you and I have experienced the Children of Israel for a very long time, go back to your Lord and tell Him to reduce it." Tell Him to relieve you. Muhammad ﷺ followed this senior advice and he went back to Allāh ﷻ and told Him, "Relieve me of some of the Prayers." Allāh ﷻ reduced them by ten. Muhammad ﷺ went down. Mūsā asked, "What happened?" Rasūlullāh ﷺ told him. He said, "Go back. Ask Allāh to give you a further reduction." He went back again; ten were reduced. He came down, [Mūsā asked,] "What happened?" [He said,] "Allāh reduced it to thirty." [He said,] "Go back again." Muhammad ﷺ goes back another time; they were reduced from thirty to twenty. Mūsā tells him, "Go back again." They were reduced from twenty to ten; Mūsā told Muhammad ﷺ, "Go back another time." Muhammad ﷺ goes back; it was reduced to five. He goes down, reports it to Mūsā, Mūsā ﷺ says, "O Muhammad, I have experience with people, I have dealt with the children of Israel, your nation will not be able to handle it. Go back and tell Allāh to reduce them further." Muhammad ﷺ said "I am so ashamed to go back to Allāh and ask Him for a further reduction, I cannot." So you can see the difference between the personality of Muhammad ﷺ and Mūsā. Mūsā would not have minded arguing with Allāh further, Mūsā ﷺ was the one who asked Allāh ﷻ, "I want to see you." Allāh ﷻ had already given Mūsā the favour of speaking to Him, [but] Mūsā wanted more, "Allāh, I want to see you." And then obviously we know what happened; he collapsed. Mūsā ﷺ is the one who punched the Angel of Death and knocked his eye out. So Mūsā ﷺ was a very strong man and that was his personality, and Subhān'Allāh, the Ambiyā' of Allāh are all the same in their Da'wah but their personalities are different. So Muhammad ﷺ did not go back, and he heard a voice saying, "This is the prescription on you; five daily prayers, but you will receive the reward of fifty."

Rasūlullāh ﷺ tells the People of Quraish of his Journey

Rasūlullāh ﷺ made it back to Dunyā on the same night. Rasūlullāh ﷺ went to Umm Ayman and he told her about what happened, he said "I have been to Jerusalem and back in this night." She said, "O Messenger of Allāh, do not tell anyone about that." Nobody will believe it, it is impossible. Now, Umm Ayman believed it, but she said that people will not, the Kuffār of Quraish will not. The journey towards Jerusalem used to take one month; Rasūlullāh ﷺ made it within one night, not only to Jerusalem but to Jerusalem and back, and he also went all the way to meet with Allāh ﷻ. Umm Ayman رضي الله عنها told him, "Do not tell your people about it." Rasūlullāh ﷺ said "I will. I will convey the Message regardless of what the people will say, it is part of my mission. I will tell them what happened." [Allāh ﷻ says:] ***Wa-Mā 'Alar-Rasūli Illal Balāghul Mubīn* – "And there is not upon the Messenger except the [responsibility for] clear notification."** [92] Your responsibility is to convey. Rasūlullāh ﷺ obviously realised the weight of this news and how difficult it will be, so he went out and was quiet and sombre. He started to speak to some people, and the news reached to Abū Jahl. Now, Rasūlullāh ﷺ was sitting in the Masjid, quiet and worried about the consequences of this news. So Abū Jahl heard about it, he came to Muhammad ﷺ and said, "O Muhammad, anything new?" Muhammad ﷺ said, "Yes." Abū Jahl said, "What?" Muhammad ﷺ said "This night, I visited Jerusalem and came back." Abū Jahl said, "Jerusalem?" Muhammad ﷺ said, "Yes." Abū Jahl said, "O Muhammad, if I would call your people right now and bring them here, would you tell them the same thing you just told me now?" Muhammad ﷺ said "Yes, I would." Abū Jahl, happy and pleased, went running calling [the] people of Quraish, "O people of Quraish! Come forward!" And he gathered them and he brought them forth, and when they were all present, he told Muhammad ﷺ, "O Muhammad, can you please tell your people what you just told me a moment ago?" Muhammad ﷺ, without any hesitation, said, "I have been to Jerusalem and back the previous night." The narrator of the Hadīth says people started clapping, whistling, laughing; they made a big joke out of it. Imagine the crowds clapping, whistling, laughing, and they were falling on each other. So some of the seasoned travellers among them who knew Jerusalem and had been there asked Muhammad ﷺ to describe the Mosque, "Describe Jerusalem to us." Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "I started describing, but then I became

vexed." Rasūlullāh ﷺ did not spend a long time there to remember every single detail of the place, but then Muhammad ﷺ said, "Allāh showed me the Mosque of Jerusalem right in front of my eyes and I described it stone by stone, brick by brick." And they said that he has given an accurate, excellent description. But then there was something else that was mentioned in another narration by Ibn Ishāq. When Muhammad ﷺ was on his way back from Jerusalem to Makkah, he passed by a caravan belonging to the people of Quraish at night, and they had lost a camel of theirs, and because Rasūlullāh ﷺ was up in the air, he was able to see it. So he called them and said, "Your camel is in this place." Now, they did not know where the voice was coming from. And then he drank some of their water and he also remembered the description of this caravan. He went back to Quraish and he told the people, "And other signs are that this caravan belonging to you, they lost a camel and I gave them directions to it, and you can ask them about it. And also, I drank some of their water in such and such container, and the caravan is headed by a camel…" and he described the camel [and] described the load on the camel. So they immediately sent out somebody to go and meet the caravan before it comes into Makkah; it was still some distance away, and the person found the description to be accurate, and that they did lose a camel and they found it because they a heard a voice coming from the sky, and also that they missed some of their water. And these were all signs that were given to them, but that was not sufficient for them to believe. Now, the story of Al-Isrā' Wal-Mi'rāj was so difficult for some to handle, it caused some of the weak Muslims to apostatise, it was such a difficult thing for them to grasp. But that is the case with these amazing miracles that Allāh ﷻ would show his Ambiyā'.

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Lessons from Al-Isrā' Wal-Mi'rāj

The Opening of the Chest of Muhammad ﷺ

Number One: The event of opening the chest of Muhammad ﷺ has occurred more than once; it occurred once when he was with Halīmah Sa'diyah when he was a child, and it occurred another time in the journey of Al-Isrā' Wal-Mi'rāj. By the way, the meaning of Al-Isrā' Wal-Mi'rāj; Isrā' means travelling at night,

the meaning of Mi'rāj is ascending. Isrā' is the journey of Rasūlullāh ﷺ from Makkah to Jerusalem, Al-Mi'rāj is the journey from Jerusalem to the heavens. So the event of opening of the chest of Rasūlullāh ﷺ happened more than once, and these are two incidences when it happened, and it could have happened again in addition to these two occurences.

The conversation of Rasūlullāh ﷺ with Mūsā ؑ

Number Two: The conversation of Rasūlullāh ﷺ with Mūsā ؑ. When Allāh prescribed fifty daily Prayers on Muhammad ﷺ, Muhammad ﷺ accepted it, but when he went down and met Mūsā ؑ, Mūsā told him, "Your nation will not be able to handle it." So Mūsā is speaking out of experience, and that is the value of experience. Sometimes knowledge does not suffice, you have to have in addition to knowledge experience. Mūsā told Muhammad ﷺ, 'I have more experience than you in dealing with the people, you are new in this, I have spent my whole life dealing with the most difficult people, Banī Isrā'īl. Believe me, they will not be able to handle it, go back and ask for a reduction.' Mūsā himself learned this, [he] learned that experience is different than knowledge. When Mūsā went to meet with Allāh ﷻ in the journey of the Forty Days, Allāh ﷻ told Mūsā that in your absence your people have worshipped the calf: **"And what made you hasten from your people, O Moses?" He said, "They are close upon my tracks, and I hastened to You, my Lord, that You be pleased." [Allāh] said, "But indeed, We have tried your people after you [departed], and the Sāmirï has led them astray."**[93] Allāh ﷻ said that your people have gone astray and they deviated due to the Sāmirï, and he made for them a calf out of gold, so Allāh told Mūsā ؑ everything that happened. Mūsā ؑ just received from Allāh the Ten Tablets, right? Ten Tablets – *Al-Alwāh*, so Mūsā had the Tablets in his hands, and he was told by Allāh that your people have deviated, so Mūsā already knew. When Mūsā went back and he saw his people worshipping the Calf, what did Mūsā do? He threw the Tablets from his hand. Mūsā ؑ already knew that; how come his response was different when he saw it compared to when he heard it? Because seeing something is not like hearing it. When Allāh told him that your people have deviated, Mūsā had the Tablets in his hand and nothing happened, but when he saw it with his own eyes, he threw the Tablets, it was a surprise for him. *Laysal Khabaru Kal Mu'āyanah* – when you see something [it] is different than hearing it. Mūsā ؑ is telling Muhammad

ﷺ that I have dealt with the people, I have had first-hand knowledge; your people cannot handle this, it is too much. And he kept on asking for reduction, and when it was reduced to five, Mūsā ﷺ told Muhammad ﷺ [that] even five is too much for them, and Subhān'Allāh Mūsā was right, Mūsā ﷺ was right. How many Muslims [there are who] do not even pray the five daily Prayers, how many of them lapse and would pray some and miss others, but may Allāh reward Mūsā for making it easy on us, at least it was reduced to five, if it would have been fifty imagine how difficult it would have been. We are barely doing the five, what would be the situation if we had to do fifty? So we owe it to Mūsā ﷺ, and we need to thank him immensely for that.

When I said that the competition between the Ambiyā' is a compassionate competition; Mūsā ﷺ, even though he wept when he knew that Muhammad ﷺ has a larger following than his, that did not hold him back from giving his advice, his valuable advice. So you can see how eager Mūsā was to help us, and how eager Mūsā was to give his advice to Muhammad ﷺ, so they loved each other, the Ambiyā' loved each other, so their competition was a competition of love of each other. Mūsā ﷺ kept on insisting and telling Muhammad ﷺ, "Go back and ask for reduction." And when Mūsā said that he [Muahmmad ﷺ] has more people entering Jannah compared to me, I think we have already touched upon the visions that Rasūlullāh ﷺ had of the Day of Judgement, seeing the different nations of the Prophets. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "Some Prophets have ten followers, some have five followers, I have seen a Prophet with two followers, I have seen a Prophet with one follower, and I have seen Prophets with no followers at all." Imagine a Prophet coming on the Day of Judgement alone, they spent their whole life in Da'wah; no one responded, nobody. And then when he saw a huge nation he thought it was his followers, but then it turned out to be the followers of Mūsā, so that is the greatest Ummah after the Ummah of Muhammad ﷺ.

The Importance of Salāh

The Third Lesson: The Importance of Salāh. There is no command, none whatsoever, that was prescribed on us in the heavens, except Salāh. Every other 'Ibādah, every other ritual that we have, was prescribed on Earth; Jibrīl would reveal to Muhammad ﷺ the Revelation on Earth, with the exception of Salāh, it

was reserved to be given to Muhammad ﷺ in this special one to one meeting between Allāh and Muhammad ﷺ. Salāh is so important that Allāh ﷻ prescribed it in a direct conversation between Him and His Messenger Muhammad ﷺ without anyone in between, everything else was a Revelation through Jibrīl with the exception of Salāh. That is to show you how important Salāh is, not only to Muhammad ﷺ, [but] even when Allāh prescribed Salāh on the people of Banī Isrā'īl, Allāh ﷻ prescribed Salāh on Mūsā in the direct conversation that happened between Allāh and Mūsā in At-Tūr. In the Āyāt in Sūrah Tā-Hā, [Allāh says:] **Indeed, I am Allāh. There is no deity except Me, so worship Me and establish Prayer for My remembrance.**[94] And that was the moment in which Mūsā became a Prophet, so he was given the command of Prayer immediately when he became a Prophet. He was told first Lā Ilāha Illallāh, and then second, to pray, and that was when Mūsā was at the age of forty and he received Revelation from Allāh, when Allāh spoke to him directly.

So that is the value of Salāh. Salāh is the 'Ibādah in which Rasūlullāh ﷺ said [that] if the Muslim does not do it they have left Islām; *Bainal 'Abd Wal Kufri Wash-Shirk Tarkus-Salāh* – Rasūlullāh ﷺ said between a person and becoming a Disbeliever is discontinuing Prayers,"[95] [meaning] not praying. So that is how important Salāh is. Not only is praying important but even playing around with the time and not praying within the interval of time is a major sin. [There is] the Āyah that says: **But there came after them successors who neglected Prayer and pursued desires; so they are going to meet evil.**[96] Allāh ﷻ promised Hellfire to who? To the ones who have lost their Prayers. Ibn Mas'ūd gives an interpretation to this Āyah, he says losing their Prayers does not mean they do not pray, but it means they prayed passed time. It is the opinion of 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb ﷺ that if a person misses one Prayer intentionally without an excuse, they have left the fold of Islām. Obviously the scholars have two opinions in regard to the Ahādīth that state the Disbelief of the one who does not pray, but the end result is that Prayer is the most important ritual in Islām, it is the one thing no one is excused from. If you do not have enough money, if you do not have the ability to make Hajj, you are excused, if you are unable to fast because of old age or illness, you are excused, if you do not have wealth, you do not have to pay Zakāh, but there is no situation where a person is excused from Prayer. If you cannot pray standing up, pray sitting down, if you cannot pray sitting down then you pray laying down, if you cannot pray laying

down because you may be paralysed or something, then with your finger, if you cannot do it with your finger then with your eyes; but there is no situation where a person is excused from praying. Even when the battle is going on, Salāh still has to be done, [as it is mentioned] in the Āyāt of Salātul Khawf. So Salāh is the only 'Ibādah in Islām where there is no excuse of not doing it; there is no relief of it, it has to be done. The scholars have said that the Muslim who is spying on the enemy and cannot pray – this is our classical scholars – they said such a person can pray with their finger, but they have to pray, Salāh needs to be done.

Importance of the Holy Land – Jerusalem and its Surroundings

Number Four: This Journey reveals to us the importance of the Holy Land – Jerusalem and its surroundings. Allāh ﷻ says in Sūrah Al-Isrā': **Exalted is He who took His Servant by night from Al-Masjid Al-Haram –**in Makkah **– to Al-Masjid Al-Aqsā, –** the furthest mosque in Jerusalem **– whose surroundings We have blessed, –** Allāh ﷻ says that that is a blessed land **– to show him of Our signs. –** Allāh has shown Muhammad ﷺ many signs on this journey – **Indeed, He is the Hearing, the Seeing.**[97]

Jerusalem was promised to the Believers; Ibrāhīm ﷺ was given that promise that your descendants, the Believers among them, will be the guardians of Jerusalem, the Holy Land, and that was the promise that was fulfilled through the Prophets of the Children of Israel; Allāh ﷻ also promised Jerusalem to Mūsā ﷺ. Now, even though Mūsā ﷺ, Moses, did not see the result of that promise in his lifetime, but it occurred in the lifetime of his successor, Yūsha' Bin Nūn, the Prophet Joshua. And the Children of Israel remained in that land as long as they were the bearers of truth, and when they deviated from the true Message of Allāh and they fought the Prophets and they attempted to Kill Jesus ﷺ and they killed other Prophets, Allāh ﷻ stripped away the land from them and gave it to the other branch, the descendants of Ismā'īl; Allāh ﷻ gave that to Muhammad ﷺ and his Ummah because now they are the ones who are carrying the torch of truth. So that land is promised to the Believers, and since now the torch is being carried by the Seal of Prophets, Muhammad ﷺ, even though Muhammad ﷺ will not open Jerusalem in his lifetime, but he must visit it, he must go and receive the keys. And the symbolism in this journey of Rasūlullāh ﷺ going to the Masjid and leading the Ambiyā' in Prayer is to show that now Muhammad ﷺ is

the inheritor of the Message of the Prophets, and he is the leader of the sons of Ādam, and the land that was under the custodianship of the Prophets of Banī Isrā'īl is now transferred to the followers of Muhammad ﷺ. And just as Mūsā did not see it in his lifetime but it happened in the lifetime of his successor Joshua, Muhammad ﷺ not see it in his lifetime and it happened in the time of 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb ؓ, the man [regarding] whom Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "If there was a Prophet after me, it would be 'Umar." So that was a blessing which Allāh reserved for 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb. And Subhān'Allāh, look at the divine destiny; when the Muslims reached to the gates of Jerusalem, even though the religious and political leadership of Jerusalem could not fight the Muslims and they had to give it up, they said, "We will surrender, but we cannot surrender to anyone but the Khalīfah of the Muslims, he must come here and take the keys with his own hands." And Subhān'Allāh, that brought out 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb to travel all the way from Madīnah to Jerusalem because he is the one who will receive the keys of Jerusalem, and he went all the way there and he was the one who was given the keys to the Holy City. So now the Muslims are the ones who have the promise of Allāh, the promise of the Holy Land – *Bait Al-Maqdis*.

With Difficulty Comes Ease

Number Five: – Which we mentioned, ***Inna Ma'al 'Usri Yusrā*** – **With Difficulty Comes Ease** [98] Rasūlullāh ﷺ went through some very difficult moments in the tenth year of his Revelation, so Allāh ﷻ gave him this blessing, the journey of Al-Isrā' Wal-Mi'rāj. And Subhān'Allāh, this was such a treat for Muhammad ﷺ; there is no tourist journey with so many attractions as this journey of Al-Isrā' Wal-Mi'rāj, and to have Jibrīl ؑ as your guide to take you through, and to meet with the Ambiyā' of Allāh, and to go in this journey to the real Wonderland, from one place to another, and then you enter into Paradise, Jannah. Rasūlullāh ﷺ, in that journey, he entered into Jannah, and he saw the river of *Al-Kauthar* which was given to him; Jibrīl ؑ told Muhammad ﷺ, "This is your river, Al-Kauthar." So it was such a bounty that Allāh ﷻ has given to Muhammad ﷺ, and that would bring [us] back to what we mentioned earlier that you never know what Allāh ﷻ is hiding for you. We mentioned that when Hajar ؑ was running between As-Safā Wal-Marwā, she did not know, she was crying at the time, she did not know that this would be followed by the greatest nation, the Ummah of Muhammad ﷺ. So when you are going through difficulties in this

world, you do not know what Allāh is reserving for you. When Allāh ﷻ says: **With difficulty comes ease**, believe in that promise. With every difficulty you go through, Allāh ﷻ is reserving for you something; whether you get it in this world or the Afterlife, you are going to get it. So the Muslim should never give up, should never feel despair.

The Position of Abū Bakr ؓ

The Sixth Lesson: The Position of Abū Bakr. How did Abū Bakr receive the news of Al-Isrā' Wal-Mi'rāj? When the people of Quraish were joking around, laughing, clapping, whistling, Abū Bakr was not present and he was coming into Makkah, and someone went and told him, "Do you know what happened? Muhammad ﷺ claims that he went to Jerusalem and he made it back." Now, what do you think the response of Abū Bakr was? Well, he did believe, but what did he say? That is an important thing to add. Abū Bakr said, "If he said it, then it is the truth." Abū Bakr did not just accept the information that was given to him, he said, "If he said it, then it is the truth." There are two things to learn; from the first segment, 'If he said it', and that is the science of verifying Hadīth. When our scholars study the lives of the narrators of the Hadīth, they want to discern whether Muhammad ﷺ said it or not; we are not just going to accept anything that is said by anyone out there, we want to make sure that Muhammad ﷺ did say it, and that is what makes a difference between us and the People of the Book. The People of the Book have accepted pretty much everything that came down to them, even if it was separated from the original source by a few centuries, so it is a blind faith, it is following *Zann* – Conjecture. But with the Muslims, no, they had this science of verification where they studied the lives of thousands and thousands of men and women, to look at their profile, whether these are truthful people or not, whether we can accept what they convey or not. So when people go back to Islāmic sources, they can feel at ease [knowing that] they are dealing with material that has been verified. "*In Kāna Qālahā Faqad Sadaqa* – If he said it, then it is the truth." So that is the science of verifying Hadīth. The second part [of the statement] is; 'Then it is the truth.' And this is the characteristic of Abū Bakr As-Siddīq ؓ and that is why he was called *As-Siddīq* – The Believer. Whatever Rasūlullāh ﷺ says, I will believe him. I have faith in him, I have faith in everything that he says.

Terminology Issue – Heaven and Paradise

Finally, there is a terminology issue. When we use the word 'heavens' or 'heaven', it confuses some to think that we are referring to Paradise. Now, that is a problem with the English language that these are synonymous, heaven and Paradise, but in Islāmic terminology they are not. Heaven is talking about the sky above us that is part of the temporary world that will be destroyed on the Day of Judgment. Paradise is referring to Jannah. Jannah is the permanent place of abode for the Believers. So whenever I am using the word heaven I am not referring to Paradise, I am referring to the sky above us. I will use, as a translation of Jannah, Paradise. So I hope this confusion is not in the mind of any one of you because I mentioned that the Ambiyā' are in the different heavens, this is not talking about Paradise, it is talking about meetings that occurred with the Ambiyā' in the heavens above us that are lower than Paradise.

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At-Tā'if

Now that Rasūlullāh ﷺ has lost the protection of his uncle Abū Tālib, and his efforts of Da'wah in Makkah were being blocked, he tried to search for other alternatives. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ made a journey to At-Tā'if, and he accompanied with him Zayd Bin Hārithah ؓ. They went to At-Tā'if, and Rasūlullāh ﷺ went to the leaders of At-Tā'if. Rasūlullāh ﷺ, that was his method, he would go to the leaders of a community, who enter the house from the gate. He went to meet the leaders of At-Tā'if, the tribe of Thaqīf, and these were three brothers. He presented the Message to them and asked them for support and help. Now, these three men responded in a miserable way. The first one of them said, "I am going to tear apart the clothing of Al-Ka'bah if Allāh has sent you as a Prophet." The clothing of Al-Ka'bah was sacred to them, so he is saying that I am going to tear it apart if Allāh has sent you as a Prophet. The second among them said, "Did not God find anyone better than you to send?" Is there not anyone out there better than you?! And the third one said, "I cannot speak to you, I just cannot speak to you, because if you are a Messenger from Allāh as you claim, then you are such an important person and I do not think that I am qualified to speak to

you, and if Allāh has not sent you as a Messenger and you are lying, then it is not appropriate for me to speak to a liar." When Rasūlullāh ﷺ heard their response, he said, "Well, if you do not want to accept my Message, at least keep this conversation that we had secret, keep it private." Rasūlullāh ﷺ did not want the news to reach to Makkah that he has been turned down by the people of Thaqīf, because it will only add to the persecution of the people of Quraish towards the Muslims, so he said, "Keep it private." But they were such evil men and rude, what they did was they went to the fools among them and their slaves and servants and they asked them to go and revile Muhammad ﷺ and scream at him. Imagine these crowds surrounding Muhammad ﷺ, pelting Muhammad ﷺ and Zayd Bin Hārithah with rocks, screaming at them, yelling, chasing them away; Rasūlullāh ﷺ and Zayd Bin Hārithah had to run out of At-Tā'if. And Zayd Ibn Hārithah ؓ was protecting the body of Muhammad ﷺ, shielding him from the rocks that the people of Thaqīf were throwing.

And they took refuge, they took shelter, in a farm that belonged to two men from Quraish, Ibnā Rabī'ah. So they went into this farm and they finally got away from the fools of Thaqīf, and Rasūlullāh ﷺ was exhausted, his feet were , and he was hurt because of the way he was treated by the people of Thaqīf. Subhān'Allāh, Allāh ﷻ sent down help on Muhammad ﷺ. He was very hungry at the time; the two owners of the farm who belonged to Makkah told their servant 'Addās, who was a Christian, "Go and take some grapes to give it to Muhammad ﷺ." They felt sympathy for Muhammad ﷺ even though they were two of his staunchest enemies, but now when they are in a foreign land in different territory, they felt sympathy towards Muhammad ﷺ and decided that we should stand up for our tribesman, we should stand up for Muhammad ﷺ, so at least let us give him these grapes. So they sent 'Addās and they told him, "Take this plate of grapes and give it to Muhammad ﷺ." 'Addās carried the grapes and he went to Muhammad ﷺ and he presented it to him, Muhammad ﷺ said, "*Bismillāh* – In the name of Allāh," and he said it loudly. 'Addās was surprised and he asked Muhammad ﷺ, he said, "These words are not said by people in this land." Arabs, people in this area, do not speak these words. The Messenger of Allāh, from these words of 'Addās, was able to imply that he is a foreigner and he might be following a different religion, so he asked 'Addās, "Where are you from and what is your religion?" And Rasūlullāh ﷺ used to ask any people he would meet where are you from. So he asked 'Addās, "Where are

you from and what is your religion?" 'Addās responded by saying, "I am a Christian man from Nīnawah." Nineveh in 'Irāq. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "So you are from the village of the pious man Yūnus Ibn Mattā – Jonah, son of Amittai," a Prophet of Allāh. 'Addās said, "And how do you know about Jonah, son of Amittai?" Muhammad ﷺ said, "He is my brother; he was a Prophet and I am a Prophet." When 'Addās heard that, he immediately bent down and started kissing the feet of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and then he kissed his hands and head. Now, the two owners of the farm from Quraish, when they saw that, they looked at each other and said, "Look, he has already corrupted our slave." Muhammad ﷺ would do Da'wah wherever he was, and these two men who felt sympathy towards Muhammad ﷺ are now regretting it; we sent in our slave to take some fruits to him and he has corrupted our slave. When 'Addās came back they told him, "What is wrong with you?! How come you were kissing his feet, hands and head?" He said, "On all [of] Earth, there is no man finer than him. He told me something that no one other than a Prophet can know." They told him, "Do not let this man make you leave your religion, because your religion is better than his." Now, what do the two sons of Rabī'ah know about Christianity? But it is the Kufr that is in their hearts that would make them say whatever [it was that] would deceive the people.

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Lessons from the Journey of Rasūlullāh ﷺ to At-Tā'if

Doing our Part to Protect Rasūlullāh ﷺ

[First Lesson:] Zayd Ibn Hārithah was the one protecting Rasūlullāh ﷺ from the rocks that were being thrown at Muhammad ﷺ, so Zayd Ibn Hārithah was protecting Rasūlullāh ﷺ, shielding him with his own body. In the Battle of Uhud, we have similar stories of Sahābah using their backs, not just to protect Rasūlullāh ﷺ from rocks like in this incident, but to protect him from arrows; this was the level of sacrifice that the Sahābah رضي الله عنهم had. Now, we might not have a chance to protect Rasūlullāh ﷺ with our physical bodies, so if we miss that chance, let us make it up by protecting Rasūlullāh ﷺ through defending his Message, through protecting his honour, through teaching others about his life – Muslims and Non-Muslims; let us do our part. Abū Muslim Al-Khawlāni, one

of the greatest of the At-Tābi'īn, said, "Do the Companions of Rasūlullāh ﷺ think that we will let them have Rasūlullāh ﷺ for themselves? No, we are going to compete with them. We want to get our share of the Messenger of Allāh." So even though we are living centuries past the time of Muhammad ﷺ, so we cannot participate physically in helping him in his mission, but it is not too late, there is a lot that we could do that would resemble what Zayd Ibn Hārithah did on that day. It might not ever be as great as what Zayd Ibn Hārithah did or what Talhah did on the Day of Uhud, but at least we can try and do something. And when we study the Seerah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and we develop love for him, it needs to encourage us to go through the same footsteps that the students of Rasūlullāh ﷺ went through.

Do Good – You Never Know What the Outcome will be

The Second Lesson: When Rasūlullāh ﷺ was speaking to the people of At-Tā'if, no one responded to him, they all rejected him, but remember what he said; do good because you never know what the outcome will be. Rasūlullāh ﷺ was chased out of At-Tā'if, so he might have thought that his words did not really leave an effect on them, but among the crowds Rasūlullāh ﷺ was speaking to was a child, his name is Khālid Al-'Udwānī, he is a member of the tribe of Thaqīf, he said, "I was standing there listening to the speech of Rasūlullāh ﷺ in the fair-grounds of At-Tā'if, and I heard the Messenger of Allāh recite Sūrah At-Tāriq, and I remembered it then when I was still a Non-Believer. And when I became Muslim, I already knew that Sūrah." So here you have Rasūlullāh ﷺ giving his speech to adults; nobody cared about what Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, but there was a child in there who remembered and memorised Sūrah At-Tāriq by listening to it from the mouth of Rasūlullāh ﷺ in At-Tā'if, and years later, Rasūlullāh ﷺ is seeing the harvest of the seed that he planted in At-Tā'if. So do good, because you never know what the outcome will be.

Da'wah through Action

Number Three: We talked about what happened between Rasūlullāh ﷺ and 'Addās, did we not? You remember 'Addās the Christian? Over here we have an example of Da'wah through action. Rasūlullāh ﷺ started by saying Bismillāh, an Islāmic act. This Islāmic act, even though it seems simple and small, was the cause of the Islām of 'Addās, because 'Addās never heard this before in this

lands of the Arabs; they do not say Bismillāh, they do not start in the name of Allāh, and that opened up a conversation between Rasūlullāh ﷺ and ‘Addās that ended up with ‘Addās admitting the Prophethood of Muhammad ﷺ and believing in him. So sometimes you might do something without paying attention, but it is attracting the attention of others around you, and that might open the door for them to have some curiosity, and that will be the beginning of their studying of Islām which might end with them accepting the Religion of Allāh. So sometimes our Da’wah could be indirectly through our action. And the reputation of the Sahābah رضي الله عنهم, that they developed after Islām, had a major role in attracting many of the other Arabs to Islām. So it was not necessarily their words, but it was their behaviour, their character, the way they changed in Islām.

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Jinn Listen to Qurān

Now Rasūlullāh ﷺ had to leave At-Tā'if, he was rejected by the people in At-Tā'if, and we said earlier that with difficulty comes ease – *Inna Ma‘al ‘Usri Yusrā*. Rasūlullāh ﷺ went through a difficult time, hardship, in At-Tā'if; Allāh ﷻ followed it with a blessing. Rasūlullāh ﷺ was reciting Qurān in the desert and some Jinn happened to be in the area, and the words of Qurān attracted them and they came to Rasūlullāh ﷺ and learned from him verses of Qurān and ended up becoming Muslim. What are Jinn? Jinn is a world of creatures that have intelligence, live with us on Earth, have quite a similar life structure like we do, they have clans, families, tribes, nations, they speak different dialects [and] languages, follow different religions, so they are pretty similar to human beings. The difference is that they were created from fire [and] we were created from clay, they see us and we do not see them. But there are Jinn who are Christian, there are Muslim Jinn, there are Jewish Jinn, there are Jinn who speak Arabic, Jinn who speak English, Jinn who speak Russian, and they might even follow the customs of the land that they live in. And many of these supernatural or strange events that people talk about and you see on the front pages of tabloids – a citing of a UFO and all of those interesting things – might easily be explained as Jinn. There is an intelligent world living with us on Earth, and these haunted places and all of this can be explained easily by Muslims, it is not a big deal for

us. You have all of this mythology that is surrounding these supernatural events, and you have a whole entertainment industry that is based on it; movies and stories and Halloween and all that stuff, when there is a simple thing behind it and that is that there is a world of creatures living with us who we cannot see; sometimes we might have sightings of them but most of the time we do not, while they have access to us and they can see us.

So these Jinn came to Rasūlullāh ﷺ and became Muslim. Now, there might have been more than one incident in which Jinn came to Rasūlullāh ﷺ and became Muslim, because the story of Al-Jinn is mentioned twice in Qurān; once in Sūrah Al-Jinn and once in Sūrah Al-Ahqāf. The verses of Sūrah Al-Ahqāf [are the following]: **And [mention, O Muhammad], when We directed to you a few of the Jinn, listening to the Qur'an. And when they attended it, they said, "Listen quietly." And when it was concluded, they went back to their people as warners. They said, "O our people, indeed we have heard a [recited] Book revealed after Moses confirming what was before it which guides to the truth and to a straight path."**[99] One commentator of Qurān who gave Tafsīr asks this following question, he says how come the Jinn said that we have heard something that was revealed after Mūsā and they did not say after ʻĪsā? How come the Jinn brought up the name of Moses and did not bring up the name of Jesus? And his explanation was that these Jinn were Jewish and they were following the Message of Mūsā, so when they heard Qurān they said [that] this is a Revelation that is coming after the Revelation that was given to Mūsā. And this commentator says that these Jinn actually were from Yemen where there were some Jews. That is one way to look at the verse; it is not necessarily the only view, but it is also an indication that the Jinn would follow the customs of the people in their area. They [the Jinn] continued: **"O our people, respond to the Messenger of Allāh and believe in him; Allāh will forgive for you your sins and protect you from a painful punishment. But he who does not respond to the Caller of Allāh will not cause failure [to Him] upon Earth, and he will not have besides Him any protectors. Those are in manifest error."**[100]

So this was an example of something good that happened to Rasūlullāh ﷺ after something that was difficult. This is mentioned to [have] happened after At-Tā'if.

The Return to Makkah from At-Tā'if

Rasūlullāh ﷺ now has to enter into Makkah again. Now, getting in is not like leaving; you could leave easily but it is not easy to get into Makkah again, especially after the news reached to Makkah that Rasūlullāh ﷺ has gone to preach his Message to the people of At-Tā'if. So now Rasūlullāh ﷺ is not able to go into Makkah again, he has to seek the protection of someone in order to enter into his own town. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ is now camping outside of Makkah, trying to find someone who would sponsor him and give him protection. He sent a message with a man named ‘Uraiqat to go to Al-Akhnas Bin Shuraiq. Now, Al-Akhnas Bin Shuraiq was living in Makkah, [but] he was an ally of the people of Quraish even though he was not one of them. So when Al-Akhnas received the message from Muhammad ﷺ, he said, “Since I am an ally of Quraish, I cannot give protection to someone who is from Quriash.” I am only an ally, I cannot go over my authority and give protection to someone who is from the tribe [of] whom I am an ally of. So Al-Akhnas Bin Shuraiq turned down the request. Muhammad ﷺ sent the same message again to Suhail Ibn ‘Amr. Suhail Ibn ‘Amr said, “I cannot give you protection because the clan of ‘Amr Bin Lu'aÿ cannot give protection to someone who is from Ka’b Bin Lu'aÿ.” Rasūlullāh ﷺ tried a third time, and he sent this time a message, a request, to Mut‘am Bin ‘Udaÿ. Mut‘am Bin ‘Udaÿ did accept the request, and Muhammad ﷺ went and spent the night at his house. Early in the morning, Al-Mut‘am asked six or seven of his sons to carry their swords and to put on some special clothes and to go out surrounding Muhammad ﷺ and to escort him to Al-Ka’bah. When they reached there they had a seat, overwatching Muhammad ﷺ while he was making Tawāf. So Abū Sufyān came to Al-Mut‘am and asked him, “Are you giving him protection or are you following him?” Al Mut‘am said, “I am only giving him protection.” Abū Sufyān said, “If that is the case, we will accept your protection.” So Rasūlullāh ﷺ now is giving Da’wah in Makkah under the protection of Al-Mut‘am Bin ‘Udaÿ.

13

In Search Of A Base

Rasūlullāh ﷺ Visits the Camps of the Arabs

Rasūlullāh ﷺ, after the passing away of Abū Tālib and Khadījah, and seeing the stalemate that the mission reached in Makkah – even though there were still some converts trickling in, but overall it was reaching to a stagnating state, and many avenues were being blocked – so the Messenger of Allāh felt the necessity of finding an alternative base, somewhere where he can have freedom to propagate the Message, and he was actively pursuing that goal by meeting with the Arab tribes, the Arab delegates, during the season of Pilgrimage, because that was a time when people came from all over Arabia to one location; Makkah. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ would devote the days of Hajj to visiting the camps of the Arabs, he would visit every tribe in their campground and give them Da'wah and ask them for protection. Az-Zuhrī states,

> "The Messenger of Allāh, would for the period of those years, present himself to the Arab tribes at each fair, speaking with each tribal leader but asking them only for their protection and support. He would say, 'I do not wish to force any of you to do anything, any of you who agree to what I ask may do so, but I would not compel anyone not so wishing. All I want is to guard myself against those who want to kill me, so that I may fulfil my Lord's mission and carry out whatever decree he wishes regarding myself and those who support me.' But not one of them accepted him, every one of these tribes reached to the following conclusion: 'The man's own tribe knew him best, how could we accept as suitable for us someone who has subverted his tribe and whom they have expelled?'"

Since his tribe did not accept him, they know best; that was their conclusion. By the way, Az-Zuhrī is one of the early Muslim scholars, he was among the generation of At-Tābi'īn or a little later than that, and he was the one who was given the responsibility of compiling Hadīth, which happened during the time of 'Umar Ibn 'Abdul 'Azīz. This was the first official project to compile the Hadīth of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, and the one entrusted with this mission was Az-Zuhrī, and the one who appointed him to that position was the Khalīfah himself, 'Umar Ibn 'Abdul 'Azīz. So again, these were the words of Az-Zuhrī.

Banū Kindah, Banū 'Abdillāh, Banū Hanīfah all Reject Rasūlullāh ﷺ

Ibn Ishāq stated that Ibn Shihāb Az-Zuhrī said – again, relating to Az-Zuhrī – that Muhammad ﷺ visited some of the tribes, and he narrates the story of [him] visiting the tribe of Kindah. [He says that] Rasūlullāh ﷺ went to them, gave them Da'wah, they refused him. Rasūlullāh ﷺ next went to a clan called Banū 'Abdillāh – the sons of 'Abdullāh. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ went to them explaining Islām, and then he told them, "And look at how Allāh has chosen for you a good name, you are the sons of 'Abdullāh." But they also turned him down. Next Rasūlullāh ﷺ went to the tribe of Banū Hanīfah, and they treated Rasūlullāh ﷺ so bad [that] Az-Zuhrī says, "None of the Arabs gave him so rude a rejection as they did." And Subhān'Allāh, the same people, Banū Hanīfah, are the ones who years later are going to lead the worst revolt ever against Muhammad ﷺ, which happened right before he died and was only ended in the time of Abū Bakr As-

Siddīq ﷺ, and this revolt was led by Musailamah Al-Kadhdhāb. Musailamah Al-Kadhdhāb was from the tribe of Banū Hanīfah, Musailamah Al-Kadhdhāb is the man who claimed prophethood, and this was the greatest revolt and one of the worst battles that occurred against the Muslim armies.

Banū ‘Āmir Bin Sa’sa‘ah

Next, Rasūlullāh ﷺ went to the campgrounds of the tribe of Banū ‘Āmir Bin Sa’sa‘ah. Banū ‘Āmir Bin Sa’sa‘ah, when their leader Baiharah Bin Farās met Rasūlullāh ﷺ and saw him and listened to his words, he became so impressed by what he saw, so Baiharah said, “I swear, if I were to have this brave man of Quraish, I could eat up the Arabs with him.” Now, Baiharah is thinking politics, he wants to recruit Muhammad ﷺ; why? To conquer the lands of the Arabs, because he saw that Muhammad ﷺ possessed qualities that were unique. So he told Muhammad ﷺ, “If we were to follow your orders and then Allāh gave you victory against those opposing you, would we have power after you were gone?” So the response of Muhammad ﷺ was, “*Al-Ardu Lillāh, Yūrithuhā May-Yashā', Wal ‘Āqibatu Lil Muttaqīn* – The Earth belongs to Allāh, and He will give power to whomever He wishes.” In other words, this is not something that I can give you, it is something in the Hands of Allāh, and it is not a matter of authority and power, this is not a power-struggle. Rasūlullāh ﷺ is telling him [that] this is a matter of religion, the Earth belongs to Allāh. The man then responded and said, “Are we to present our throats to the Arabs in your defence, and then if God gave you victory, see power go elsewhere than to us?” He understood that standing up with Muhammad ﷺ is a risk, and we are going to have to fight for it, [but] he was telling Muhammad ﷺ that we are not going to sacrifice our lives and then see the power being transferred to someone else, [and he said,] “We will not have anything to do with you,” and he turned down the offer of Muhammad ﷺ, he rejected the Message.

Banū ‘Āmir Bin Sa’sa‘ah went back to their homeland, and there was an old man among them who was a wise elder of theirs. Because of his age he was not able to attend the Pilgrimage, but whenever they would come back, he would ask them about the events that happened. So when they went back they told him, “We met a young man, the grandson of ‘Abdul Muttalib from Quraish, and he was claiming to be a Prophet and he came to us and we rejected him.” This old

man said, after putting his hand over his forehead, "Could your mistake be put right? Can its consequences be reversed? I swear, no descendent of Ismā'īl ever made such a claim falsely, it has be true! Where did your good judgment go?" This wise old man told them that none of the descendants of Ismā'īl ﷺ has ever claimed to be a prophet, this is not something common among the Arabs, the Arabs do not know the concept of prophethood to claim it, the Arabs were an illiterate nation, they did not have a history of prophethood, the last Prophet they knew was Ismā'īl ﷺ which was more than two thousand years before that, so for them to claim prophethood is something that never happened. So this old man was saying, 'It must be true, where was your good judgement?!' And then he said, 'Is this a mistake that can be rectified?' Is this something that we can fix?

Abū Bakr's Expertise in Genealogy

There is another narration by Abū Na'īm and Al-Hākim and Al-Bayhaqī. I am going to have to read through this, it is quite long, but I find it a fascinating conversation, it shows the qualities of Abū Bakr As-Siddīq ﷺ, 'Alï is the one who is narrating this story. 'Alï Ibn Abī Tālib says, "When God ordered His Messenger to present himself to the tribes of the Arabs, he left along with myself and Abū Bakr for Minā'." Minā' is where the camps are set, just like today in Hajj; that is where people spend the three days of *Ayyām Tashrīq*, that is where the tents are. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ is visiting these different Arab tribes, and Rasūlullāh ﷺ used to always accompany Abū Bakr with him because Abū Bakr was an expert in genealogy, Abū Bakr knew the history of the tribes, their names, their legends, he knew a lot about them and this was an asset that Rasūlullāh ﷺ was taking advantage of, because Abū Bakr As-Siddīq was a walking encyclopedia when it came to the genealogy of the Arab tribes. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ used to always accompany Abū Bakr with him. Plus, Abū Bakr was a well-known man, he has travelled widely and he was known by the various Arab tribes. Anyway, 'Alï Ibn Abī Tālib says, "Abū Bakr, God bless him, went forward and made his greetings. He was in the very vanguard of good and an expert in genealogy." So he came to this *Majlis* – meeting, of this particular clan. Abū Bakr As-Siddīq ﷺ walked up to them, and when 'Alï Ibn Abī Tālib says, '*Wa Kāna Sabbāqin Ilā Kulli Khair* – He was at the very vanguard of every good,' 'Alï Ibn Abī Tālib was telling us that in everything

good you would find Abū Bakr ahead of everyone else; Abū Bakr was first. You know, [there is] the story when ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb said, “Tonight I am going to do something that Abū Bakr did not do,” and he went to Rasūlullāh ﷺ and gave him half of his money, and he said, “O Rasūlullāh, did anyone else come to you?” Rasūlullāh ﷺ said “Yes, Abū Bakr came to me and he gave all of his money.” ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb said, “I will never compete with him after this.” So ‘Alï Ibn Abī Tālib is saying that Abū Bakr is ahead of every good; [in] everything good, you will find Abū Bakr [there] first. He was the one who walked up to these men, he greeted them and then he said, “From whom do you people come?” They said, “We are from Rabī‘ah,” the tribe of Rabī‘ah which was in the north east part of Arabia; they may have been in the area of ‘Irāq. Rabī‘ah is a large tribe, Abū Bakr now wants to narrow it down a little further. They said, “We are from Rabī‘ah,” Abū Bakr said, “*A'min Hāmmahā Am Min Lawāzinhā?*” It is translated here as, “From its mainstream or its branch?” Actually a more accurate translation will be, “Are you from the forehead…” – Hāmmahā means the forehead – “Are you from the forehead or are you from the branches?” The limbs, meaning you are from the lower parts of the tribe. They said, “We are from the greatest mainstream of it,” meaning we are the best. Abū Bakr As-Siddīq ﷺ wanted to verify that claim, to realise whether they are the elites of their people or they are from the laymen, so Abū Bakr started this conversation, he asked, “Is ‘Awf of you, of whom it is said, ‘There is no free man in ‘Awf’s valley?’” This man, ‘Awf, was from the tribe of Rabī‘ah, and he was such a strong man that everyone in the valley was so submissive to him [that] they ended up saying that there is no one free in his valley. And by the way, in the culture of pre-Islāmic Arabia, strength and power and sometimes even violence, was viewed with respect; this is one of the things that Islām came to change, that oppression is not good. So Abū Bakr asked, “Is ‘Awf of you, of whom it is said, ‘There is no free man in ‘Awf’s valley?’” They said, “No”. “Does Bastān Bin Qais, Abul Liwā' and Muntahal Ahyā' belong to you?” They said, “No.” “Is Al-Hawfazān Bin Shuraiq, the killer of kings and the robber of their souls, a kinsman of yours?” “No.” “Is Jassās Bin Murrah, the protector of honour and the defender of the neighbour, from you?” They said, “No.” “Is Al-Muzdalaf, he of the unique turban, from you?” They said, “No.” “Are you related to the Kings of Kindah?” “No.” “Are you related to the Kings of Lakhm?” “No.” Abū Bakr said, “So you are not from the mainstream, but you

are from the branch." You can see the detailed information that Abū Bakr As-Siddīq ﷺ had about these people.

Now, a young man from Rabī'ah stood up, his name is Daghfal, his beard just beginning to sprout, meaning he was young in age. He jumped up and he grabbed the bridle of Abū Bakr's camel reciting, "Those who ask of us will be asked of. As for the burden of proof, we neither know it nor bear it as responsibility." He then said, "Hey you! You asked and we replied, hiding nothing from you. We want to ask you something, who are you?" Now it is our turn. You asked us questions, we answered, give us a chance to ask you. "So who are you?" He said, "I am a man from Quraish." The youth commented, "Well said, you are a people of leadership and nobility, the vanguard and guide of the Arabs." There is nothing to complain about; you are from Quraish, you are from the nobility. Now let me narrow it down, "What part of Quraish are you from?" Abū Bakr said, "I am of Banū Taim Bin Murrah." Banū Taim Bin Murrah are a small clan in Quraish; was not famous, they were not known for any special strength or uniqueness. So the young man said, "You have shown the target shooter where the bull's eye is." He said, "Is Qusaÿ Bin Kilāb, he who killed at Makkah those trying to conquer it, a kinsman of yours? That man Qusaÿ, who drove the rest of them away and brought his own people from all over and settled them in Makkah, took over the temple and set Quraish in the dwellings, the man who was therefore known as the Unifier, and about whom a poet spoke the verse, '*Was it not your father who was called the Unifier by whom God brought together the tribes of Firr?*'" Abū Bakr said, "No." "Were not 'Abd Manāf, the ultimate giver of advice, and Abul Ghadārif, the great leader, of your stock?" Abū Bakr said, "No." "And 'Amr Bin 'Abd Manāf – Hāshim, who prepared bread and meat into the dish…" – You remember when we talked about Hāshim? So he was now famous as being the one who started *Ath-Tharīd* – "…who prepared bread and meat into the dish, Ath-Tharīd, for his people and all of Makkah, was he not of you? The one of whom the poet said, '*'Amr Al-'Ulā prepared the Tharīd for his people, while the men of Makkah were destitute and under famine. To him they attribute both the journeys, that of the winter and that of the summer. Quraish were as an egg, which when split open came to have its best part, its yolk, as the 'Abd Manāf. They are the wealthy, as is no other known, and they are those who say, 'Come on in' to the guests. They are those who strike down pure white sheep, those who protect the*

innocent with their swords. How fine for you if you stay at their abode, they will protect you from all ills and accusations.' So is he of you?" Abū Bakr said, "No." Then the youth continued, "You must be related to 'Abdul Muttalib, that venerable man of much praise, controller of the Makkah caravan, and the feeder of the birds of the skies and the wild beasts, of the lions in the desert, he whose face shines forth like a moon on a dark night?" "No," said Abū Bakr. Now remember, they called 'Abdul Muttalib the feeder of the lions and the beasts and the birds because of the hundred camels that he slaughtered and refused to take anything of it. "Then you must be of those who have the privilege of *Ifādah*?" "No." "Perhaps of those who have the privilege of Hijābah?" "No." "Then those with the privilege of Nadwah?" "No." "Then you must be of those who have the privilege of Siqāyah?" "No." "Are you then of those with the privilege of providing Rifādah?" "No." And he is answering no to all of these questions.

Now, this was becoming too much for Abū Bakr, so Abū Bakr just turned around and tried to leave, and he pulled the bridle out of the youth's hand. The young man then responded by reciting a line of poetry, he said, "*Sādafa Darrus Saili Darran Yadfa'uh, Fatāratan Yasda'uhū Wa Tāra Yahdhibuh* – Your flood has met a greater flood that is coming from me, once it will crack it and another time it will go over it." So you thought that you have flooded me; I have shown you that I could send over you a greater flood. And then he commented, "Well I swear our brother of Quraish, if you had continued to hold out, I would have proven to you that you belong to the lowest class of Quraish, not to its elite." Rasūlullāh ﷺ came over smiling after this interesting conversation! And 'Alï told Abū Bakr, "Well this Bedouin has turned out to be a disaster for you." Abū Bakr As-Siddīq ؓ said, "Yes, and there is never a catastrophe without another that follows, and calamity is compounded by words."

Banū Shaibān

'Alï then continued and said, "We went to a meeting where you could see calm and dignity in the people, and Abū Bakr went to them and greeted them and he asked them, 'Where are you from?' They said, 'We are from Banū Shaibān.'" So Abū Bakr came to report to Rasūlullāh ﷺ and said, "These are people who have experience and power." So Abū Bakr ؓ went to the group leaders which were Mafrūq Bin 'Amr, and Hānī Bin Qubaisah, and Al-Muthannā Bin Hārith, and

An-Nu'mān Bin Shuraiq. And the person who was closest to Abū Bakr As-Siddīq was Hānī Bin Qubaisah, and he was described as having two braids that came down to his chest. Abū Bakr asked him, "How many are you in number?" Hānī replied, "We are more than a thousand strong, and a few men cannot beat a thousand as they say." And then he asked, "And how would protection be with you?" He said, "We go to the limit, and every people have their limit." Abū Bakr then asked, "And how is it when you make war with your enemies?" Abū Bakr is trying to assess their strength. They said, "When we meet in battle, we are the angriest of men. We take greater pride in our steeds than our sons, care more for our swords than our camels. Victory rests with Allāh, sometimes He grants us victory, sometimes others victory over us. You seem to be a member of Quraish?" So Abū Bakr replied, "Yes." And then he said, "Have you heard of the Messenger of Allāh?" So Hānī said, "We have heard that he *says* he is the Messenger of Allāh," meaning we do not yet know but we have heard that rumour. So then Hānī wanted to hear from Muhammad ﷺ, after Abū Bakr has paved the way and opened a conversation. Now Rasūlullāh ﷺ came in and he started speaking, and he spoke after Hānī asked him to, he [Hānī] said, "What do you propound, O brother of Quraish?" He said, "I call upon you to bear witness that there is no God but Allāh alone who has no associate, and that I am the Messenger of Allāh. I ask you to shelter and protect me until I can carry out what Allāh has ordered me to do. Quraish came out against Allāh's commands and have denied His Messenger, they have sided with wrong against right, but Allāh is All Powerful, All Praised." So Hānī, he did like the words of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, he asked him for some more; Rasūlullāh ﷺ recited to him some Āyāt from Sūrah Al-An'ām. Hānī said, "And what else do you propound, O brother of Quraish? I swear these are not words of any Earthly mortal; if they were, we would know them to be." So Rasūlullāh ﷺ recited Āyāt from Sūrah An-Nahl. Anyway, after Rasūlullāh ﷺ had explained the Message of Islām, Hānī liked what he heard, but then he said, "We have people behind us and we cannot speak for them." We are just a delegation from their people and we cannot give a commitment now, we have to go back and consult our people. And he said words, he said, "I consider that abandoning our religion and following you in yours because of one meeting we are having with you, which had neither introduction nor follow-up, and without our giving it full consideration, nor examining what the consequences would be of what you suggest, that would be

a lapse in judgment, rationalist [101] , and inadequate consideration of consequences."

So these people were very calm, they did not want to rush into judgement, they said we have to think it over, we cannot just leave our religion after one meeting with you. So you can see that there is a difference between these different tribes; with Al-Ansār they immediately accepted, because the grounds were prepared for them, but with Banū Shaibān they said, "There was no introduction to this and there was no follow-up, we cannot just convert right now. So let us go back to our people and consult them, but I want you to also hear the opinion of Al-Hārithah." There were three leaders; one was religious, one was political, and the other one was tribal affairs. So Hānī spoke his opinion and now he wants to let Al-Hārithah speak.[102] So Al-Hārithah said, "I heard and I liked what you said," so they were all impressed. "I was impressed by your words, but our answer should be that of Hānī Bin Qubaisah. For us to leave our religion and follow you after one sitting with us would be like us taking residence between two pools of stagnant water; one Al-Yamāmah, and the other As-Samāwah." Rasūlullāh ﷺ did not understand that, he said, "And what might those pools of stagnant water be?" Al-Muthannā replied, "One of these is where the land extends to the Arab world, and the other is that of Persia and the rivers of Khosrow – Kisrā. We would be reneging on a pact that Khosrow has placed upon us, to the effect that we would not cause an incident and not give sanctuary to a trouble-maker. This policy you suggest for us is such a one thing that kings dislike. As for those areas bordering Arab lands, the blame of those so acting would be forgiven and excuses for them be accepted, but for those areas next to Persia, those so acting would not be forgiven and no such excuses would be accepted. If you want us to help you and protect you from whatever relates to Arab territories alone, we would do so." In case you did not understand what Muthannā is referring to here; the land of Banū Shaibān was bordering the Persian Empire, so their military leader who knows the contracts between them and the Persian Empire, Al-Muthannā, he said, "We have an agreement between us and the Persians that we will never give sanctuary to a trouble-maker, and this religion of yours is something that kings do not like." So look at his wisdom that he realised from his meeting with Rasūlullāh ﷺ that this is something that kings would not really like, because kings want to have authority in their hands to abuse others and this is a religion that is to free people. He said, 'We cannot

offer you protection from the Persian side but we can offer you protection from the Arab side. So the land that is bordering the Arabs, we will promise you that we will protect you from them, but the area that is bordering Persia, we cannot promise you anything, we cannot stand in front of the Persian Empire, it is too much for us.'

Rasūlullāh ﷺ responded by saying, "Your reply is in no way bad, for you have spoken eloquently and truthfully," – you have been honest – "but God's Religion can only be engaged in by those who encompass it from all sides." Rasūlullāh ﷺ did not want to have half a deal, did not want to have a compromised deal; Rasūlullāh ﷺ wanted to have complete protection. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said the Religion of Allāh needs to be surrounded from every direction; I want an absolute commitment to protect me, you cannot say that I am going to protect you from one side but not from the other. What we can learn from this is that in our negotiations and in our deals, we need to keep in mind that the Religion of Allāh needs to be held in high esteem, and we should not bargain and negotiate in it, and we should not compromise its terms, and if the agreement does not fulfil the Islāmic terms, we do not have to involve in it. Rasūlullāh ﷺ felt no need in joining an agreement even though he knew his situation in Makkah, he knew how difficult it was, and he knew how badly he needs to leave, nevertheless he did not want to enter into an agreement that was half-hearted, half way through, and this is where you put your trust in Allāh ﷻ; Rasūlullāh ﷺ left it up to Allāh ﷻ and refused to accept that particular agreement from the people of Banū Shaibān.

Al-Ansār

Al-Ansār

Ibn Ishāq goes on with the story of Al-Ansār. Now, who are Al-Ansār? When Al-Aws Wal-Khazraj became Muslim, they were called Al-Ansār, which means 'The Protectors'. Al-Aws Wal-Khazraj were the two Arab tribes that were living in Madīnah, and they were descendants of the branch of Qahtān. You see, the Arabs divide into 'Adnān and Qahtān; Qahtān are the Arabs of Yemen and 'Adnān are the descendants of Ismā'īl ﷺ, so Al-Aws Wal-Khazraj were from Qahtān. They were neighbouring three Jewish tribes; Banū Qurayzah, Banū

Qaynuqā' and Banū Nadīr. Al-Madīnah was unique in that it offered a protection from three sides; there were two rocky tracks on the east and west which were inaccessible for armies to cross, and then there were the trees, the farms of Madīnah towards the south. So the only direction where an army can attack Madīnah is from the north, so it has this natural protection from three sides.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ Invites Al-Khazraj to Islām

Rasūlullāh ﷺ visited the camp of Al-Khazraj in Hajj. When Rasūlullāh ﷺ came in, he asked them, "Who are you?" They said, "We are from Al-Khazraj." Rasūlullāh ﷺ asked, "Are you the allies of the Jews?" They said, "Yes." Rasūlullāh ﷺ asked, "Can I speak to you?" They agreed. So they sat down and Rasūlullāh ﷺ invited them to Islām. Subhān'Allāh, they were very eager to hear what Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, and they immediately accepted, and they told Rasūlullāh ﷺ, "We have left our own people, for they have such discord and dissension between them not found in any other. Perhaps God may unite them through you. We will go forth among them and invite them to you, presenting to them this religion we have accepted from you. If God should unite them around you, then no one will be dearer to us than you." This immediate acceptance of Islām by this small group of Al-Khazraj, the number was six; how come it happened that way? How come the Ansār were not resistant to the Message of Islām like the other Arab tribes? There are a few reasons:

They were Yearning for Peace

Number One: The people of Madīnah were in a constant warfare among themselves; Al-Aws Wal-Khazraj were fighting an age-old war between themselves. Imagine two tribes living in the same city and they are fighting with each other. So they were yearning for peace, and when these men of Al-Khazraj heard the Message of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, they said, "Maybe Allāh will unite us through you," we really need peace, we have been at each other's throats for so long. That is one reason.

Monotheism was Naturally Appealing to them

Second Reason: The Aws and Khazraj had a natural [appeal to monotheism]; monotheism was appealing to them, because they were neighbours of the Jews,

and the Arabs used to see the religion of the Jews being superior to theirs. Why is that? The Jews were learned, they had scripture, they had teachings, they had knowledge, while the religion of the Arabs was merely myths and idols and killing of their daughters. So if it was not for the Jewish prejudice and arrogance towards the Arabs, most likely Al-Aws Wal-Khazraj would have been Jewish, but the reason why they did not convert is because the Jews used to always treat them as if they are a lower class [people] and as if the Jewish religion is only suitable for the elites.

They Knew this was a Time of a Prophet

[Number Three:] And sometimes there would be conflicts between the Arabs and the Jews, so the Jews would say, "This is a time of a Prophet who will appear, and when he comes out, we will follow him and we will kill you like the people of ʻĀd were killed." So number three, the Arabs also knew that this is a time of a Prophet. So the Arabs of Aws Wal-Khazraj were prepared for this Message, Allāh ﷻ had prepared them. They knew about the monotheistic religion of the Jews, and they knew the value of Tawhīd – the oneness of Allāh, they knew that a Prophet is coming, and they needed peace.

They were in Search of Leadership

And Number Four: A few years before Hijrah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, a battle called Buʻāth occurred between Al-Aws Wal-Khazraj. This was such a violent war, it ended up killing most of the current leaderships of both tribes. So imagine having two clans with the majority of their leaders, their seniors, killed. So now you have a people who are looking for leadership; they do not have an established structure of leadership among them, so when they heard the Message of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, they were looking forward to have him lead them.

So all of these were elements, when combined together, it made Madīnah a very fertile ground for the spread of Islām. There is a statement by ʻĀ'ishah ؓ, she said, "The war of Buʻāth was preparation by Allāh ﷻ for the migration of Rasūlullāh ﷺ." And she says, "Qutilat Sarawātuhum – Their leaders were killed," because remember, we said that the people who tend to be the most resistant to the truth are who? The leaders of a society. Now Al-Aws Wal-Khazraj do not have that hurdle in front of them, their leaders were killed in the Battle of Buʻāth. And Ibn Ishāq says,

> "One way [through] which God facilitated their acceptance of Islām was that the Jews were there with them in their country; these were followers of the Scripture and men of knowledge. Though they themselves were Polytheists and idol worshippers, they had previously attacked these Jews and their territories, and whenever disputes had arisen, the latter had told them, 'A Prophet will now be sent, his day is coming. We will follow him and give you the same fate as that of the peoples of 'Ād and Iram.'"

So Subhān'Allāh, you can see how Allāh was preparing Al-Aws Wal-Khazraj for this great responsibility. Now, ***'Asā An Takrahū Shay'an Wa Huwa Khairullakum* – But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you.**[103] This war that happened between Al-Aws Wal-Khazraj and killed many of them; even though it caused a lot of bloodshed and harm to them, it was one of the reasons that brought them closer to Islām.

Al-Ansār Accept Islām and Pledge Allegiance to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ

So these six men accepted Islām and they told Rasūlullāh ﷺ, "We will go back to our people and start preaching the Message." And they made an appointment with Rasūlullāh ﷺ to meet him next year in the season of Hajj. So a year passed by and now the season of Hajj approached. The six came back as twelve. We had the original six, [now] in addition to them [were] six more Muslims. The earlier six were all from Al-Khazraj, [although] there is one narration that says five were from Al-Khazraj and one from Al-Aws. Now in the second year, there were twelve; ten of them were from Al-Khazraj and two from Al-Aws. They came to Rasūlullāh ﷺ and they gave him pledge of allegiance and it was called 'The Pledge of the Women,' even though none of them was a female. These twelve were males, but the pledge of allegiance was called *Bay'atun-Nisā'* – the Pledge of Allegiance of the Women; why? Because it did not include within its terms any pledge of fighting. The terms of the pledge were: "We pledge to the Messenger of Allāh, on the night of the first meeting at 'Aqabah, that we would not associate any other god with Allāh, that we would not steal, commit fornication, kill our children, make false accusations, nor disobey him in anything good." He ﷺ told us, "If you keep to this, you shall have Paradise, but if you give up any of this, and you are punished for it in this world, then that

will provide atonement for you, but if it is overlooked until Judgment Day, it will be up to Allāh to decide whether to punish or to forgive you." So you can notice here that the pledge includes them committing themselves to Islām and worshipping as individuals, but it does not include any terms relating to protection or fighting, and that is why it was called Bay'atun-Nisā'. Why was it given this name? Because this was the pledge of allegiance that women would give to Muhammad ﷺ.

Implementation of Hadd Forgives the Sin

Now, there is a Fiqh issue to be dealt with here. You notice here that these are major sins; stealing, fornicating, killing children, making false accusations; these are all major sins, and there is a *Hadd* – a punishment, prescribed. Now, Rasūlullāh ﷺ says here that if the punishment is fulfilled in this world, that will forgive you of the sin, however, if the punishment is not done in this world, then it is up to Allāh to either forgive or punish. So if someone steals, and they are punished for their stealing by the cutting of the hand, then that forgives the sin, the sin is gone, but if the punishment is not implemented, on the Day of Judgement it is up to Allāh to forgive or to punish for that particular sin, and this relates to *Al-Kabā'ir* – the major sins.

Mus'ab Bin 'Umair ؓ Appointed to Teach the People of Madīnah Islām

Now Rasūlullāh ﷺ appointed Mus'ab Bin 'Umair to go and teach the people of Madīnah Islām. You can call him an ambassador, you can call him a teacher, you can call him a scholar; he had all of these roles in one. Mus'ab Ibn 'Umair ؓ came from a wealthy family in Quraish. Mus'ab Ibn 'Umair was the most spoiled young man in Makkah before Islām, he used to wear the most expensive clothes, he would have the best perfume, and his mother was taking care of him; she was a very wealthy woman and she did not have many kids, so she was taking very good care of them, and he became spoilt. He became Muslim. His mother boycotted him, she stood against him, and Subhān'Allāh, Mus'ab Bin 'Umair who was wealthy, turned from wealth to poverty, from living a spoiled life to living a tough and harsh life. And when Mus'ab Ibn 'Umair ؓ was killed in the Battle of Uhud, the witnesses of his burial said [that] he did not even leave behind enough money to buy a coffin. And obviously since he is a Shahīd

he is not wrapped in any special clothes, but when he was fighting, he had on himself one piece of cloth that was not sufficient to cover him, so they said, "Whenever we would cover his face, his feet would appear, and whenever we would cover his feet, his face would appear. So we went to Rasūlullāh ﷺ and asked him, 'What can we do?' He said, 'Cover his face, and then use some tree leaves to cover his feet.'" Mus'ab Ibn 'Umair was given this difficult task and major responsibility of being the personal representative of Rasūlullāh ﷺ in Madīnah. So now Mus'ab Ibn 'Umair left Makkah and he went to reside in Madīnah. Since Al-Aws Wal-Khazaraj were enemies, Mus'ab Ibn 'Umair had to lead them in Salāh, because none of them would accept praying behind an Imām from the other tribe. One day, Mus'ab Ibn 'Umair ﷺ was with As'ad Bin Zurārah who was his host; As'ad Bin Zurārah was the one who was hosting Mus'ab Bin 'Umair. So they went to visit some of the Muslims. They went into this farm [or] garden and they were sitting there and the Muslims were coming to them to learn; they would come and meet with Mus'ab Bin 'Umair and he would teach them, he would hold *Halaqāt* – sessions for them in this place. They happened to go to a neighbourhood of Madīnah that was part of Al-Aws's territory. Now, remember that the majority of the Muslims were from which tribe, Al-Aws or Al-Khazraj? From Al-Khazraj. So Islām now was spreading with speed among Al-Khazraj but it was not catching up with Al-Aws.

The Islām of Sa'd Bin Mu'ādh and Usaid Bin Khudair – A Huge Breakthrough

So now Mus'ab Ibn 'Umair was trying to make inroads within Al-Aws, so they went to an area that is in the land of Al-Aws and they sat there. The leaders of Al-Aws were close by; Sa'd Ibn Mu'ādh and Usaid Bin Khudair. Sa'd Ibn Mu'ādh spotted Mus'ab Ibn 'Umair and As'ad Bin Zurārah. Sa'd Ibn Mu'ādh told Usaid Bin Khudair, "I want you to go to those two men and tell them that we do not want them around misguiding the weak and foolish among us. And if it was not for the fact that As'ad Bin Zurārah was my relative, I would have done that myself." As'ad Bin Zurārah was in a position that, Subhān'Allāh, prepared him to carry this role of hosting Mus'ab. As'ad Bin Zurārah was from Al-Khazraj, but he was a cousin of the head of Al-Aws, so on the mothers side he was a relative of Sa'd Bin Mu'ādh, so he had ties to both tribes, both to Al-Aws and Al-Khazraj. Sa'd Ibn Mu'ādh told Usaid Bin Khudair, "I want you to

go and kick them out. And if it was not for the fact that As‘ad Bin Zurārah is my relative, I would have done that myself.” So now Usaid Bin Khudair went up carrying his spear towards Mus‘ab Bin ‘Umair and As‘ad Bin Zurārah. As‘ad Bin Zurārah saw him coming and he told Mus‘ab Bin ‘Umair, “This is a leader of his people, be sincere with him.” Do your best, because if he becomes Muslim, many people will follow him. Mus‘ab Bin ‘Umair said, “If he listens, I would.” So now Usaid Bin Khudair came and he stood above them carrying his spear, speaking to them in a very harsh tone. He said, “We do not want you around here misleading the weak and ignorant among us. And if you care about your lives, you better get out of here, otherwise this is my spear,” [meaning] you can be killed. So he threatened them, and one of the attendees of the Halaqah said, “Well, you are the one who is misleading us,” and he started an argument. Mus‘ab Ibn ‘Umair responded calmly by saying, “How about you sit down and you hear what I say? If you like it, you can accept it, if you do not, you can reject it.” Usaid Bin Khudair said, “Fair enough,” and he stuck his spear in the ground and he sat down. Mus‘ab Ibn ‘Umair started reciting to him Āyāt of Qurān, giving him Da’wah, explaining Islām. As‘ad Bin Zurārah said, “Even without him speaking a word, we were able to see Islām entering his heart because of the calmness in his face and the radiance of light coming out of it.” We could see it on his face. And when Mus‘ab Ibn ‘Umair finished with his session with Usaid Bin Khudair, Usaid Bin Khudair said, “What does one have to do to join your religion?” Mus‘ab Bin ‘Umair told him, “Wash yourself, and you come and pray.” Usaid Bin Khudair did that, and then he came back and he said, “Now I am going to send you a man, [who] if he becomes Muslim, all of his people will follow him.” Usaid Bin Khudair went to Sa’d Bin Mu‘ādh. Now, Sa’d Bin Mu‘ādh saw Usaid Bin Khudair and he said, “I swear by Allāh that he is coming to us with a different face than the one he left us with.” The Arabs had this *Farāsah* thing; Farāsah is the art of reading the face, and it is reported that Ash-Shāfi‘ī went to Yemen to learn this art, so it was an art that existed. And a Chinese Muslim brother said that also in China some people have this art. You look at the face of a person and you try to read what is in their hearts, what they are thinking about, what is going on with them. There is an incident when ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb was Khalīfah, he saw a man passing by and he said, “This man is either a soothsayer or he has been a soothsayer in the past.” So

they went and asked this man and he said, "Yes, I used to be a soothsayer." So ʻUmar Ibn Al-Khattāb just knew it by looking at his face.

So when Sa'd Ibn Muʻādh looked at the face of Usaid Bin Khudair, he said, "He is coming back to us with a different face to the face he left us with." Sa'd Ibn Muʻādh asked him what happened; Usaid Ibn Khudair said, "Everything is fine, do not worry about it. There is a slight problem however, and that is that Banū Al-Hārith want to kill Asʻad Bin Zurārah because they know that he is your cousin." In case you do not remember the names, Asʻad Bin Zurārah is the man with Musʻab Bin ʻUmair and he is the cousin of Sa'd Ibn Muʻādh. Usaid Bin Khudair said, "Banū Al-Hārith," – this is a branch of Al-Khazraj – "want to kill Asʻad Bin Zurārah because he is your relative." Usaid Bin Khudair made up the whole story; that was not true. The whole reason why he made it up is [because] he wants Sa'd Bin Muʻādh to go and meet Musʻab Bin ʻUmair. Sa'd Ibn Muʻādh stood up angry and he said, "They want to kill my cousin?!" He picked up the spear and he left and he said, "You have not done me any good!" And he went there, and you can see anger on his face, and he was carrying his spear. Musʻab Bin ʻUmair saw him coming. Asʻad Bin Zurārah told Musʻab, "This is the leader of his people, do the best you can – *Bi'isdiqullāha Fī.*" Sa'd Ibn Muʻādh came, and Sa'd Ibn Muʻādh just took a look at the meeting and he realised that the story that Usaid Bin Khudair reported was fabricated, because it did not seem that they were terrified, it did not seem that there was a plot to kill Asʻad Bin Zurārah, otherwise they would have been acting differently. So Sa'd Ibn Muʻādh realised that Usaid Bin Khudair has made up this story because he wants him to come and see what is happening. Sa'd Bin Muʻādh came and he told Asʻad Bin Zurārah, "Why are you doing this to me? Why are you bringing this man to my territory? You are taking advantage of your relationship with me? You want to mislead the ignorant and the weak among us?" Musʻab Ibn ʻUmair responded and said, "How about you sit down and hear what I have to say? If you like it, you can accept it, if you do not, you can reject it." Sa'd Ibn Muʻādh agreed and he sat down. Notice here that the people of Madīnah are open-minded, they do not have the sense of hostility that existed in Makkah, they were willing to listen. So Sa'd Ibn Muʻādh sat down, Musʻab Ibn ʻUmair - the choice of Rasūlullāh ﷺ for this mission; Subhān'Allāh, he had the *Hikmah* – the wisdom, of a Dāʻiyah, someone who preaches Islām – he started giving Sa'd Ibn Muʻādh the Message. Asʻad Bin Zurārah said, "I could read in his face the fact that he

wants to become a Muslim." And when the conversation finished, Sa'd Ibn Mu'ādh accepted Islām. And what was the first action Sa'd Ibn Mu'ādh did? He went to his people and he asked, "What is your opinion of me?" They said, "You are the wisest among us, and you are our leader." Sa'd Ibn Mu'ādh said, "Well none of you speak to me, and I will speak to none of you, until you become Muslim." The narrator of the Hadīth said, "By the end of that evening, every house among Banū Al-Ash'hal was Muslim." The whole clan of Banū Ash'hal which was a branch of Al-Aws. So now a huge breakthrough was made within Al-Aws [too], so you have both Al-Aws Wal-Khazraj.

14

The Road To Madīnah

Al-Ansār Set Off to their Appointment with Rasūlullāh ﷺ

So we have now covered *Bay'atul 'Aqabah Al-Ūlā* - the First Pledge of Allegiance of Al-'Aqabah, the terms of which was called The Pledge of Allegiance of the Women. Mus'ab Ibn 'Umair has done outstanding work in spreading the Message, and by the time the next Hajj season arrived, the narrator of the Hadīth says, "There was no house in Madīnah that did not have a Muslim in it," because of the effort of Mus'ab Bin 'Umair. So now the appointment to meet Rasūlullāh ﷺ in Pilgrimage was approaching, so over seventy of the Muslims went with the Pilgrims of their people. So the delegation that came out of Madīnah included Muslims and Non-Muslims, and the Muslims had a secret appointment with Muhammad ﷺ, but they went out with

the group that was leaving from Madīnah. So there were over seventy men who were Muslim and two women.

Al-Barā' Bin Ma'rūr Prays Towards Jerusalem

Ka'b Ibn Mālik ﷺ narrates the following story, he says "We were among the Pilgrims of our people, some were Muslim and some were Non-Muslim, and our leader and elder was Al-Barā' Bin Ma'rūr, he was the leader among the Muslims. Al-Barā' Bin Ma'rūr came to us, a group of Muslims, and he said, 'I have an Idea and I want to get your opinion; I do not feel comfortable turning my back towards this building in Prayer.'" He was referring to Al-Ka'bah. What was the *Qiblah* of the Muslims at that time? Praying to Al-Aqsā, Jerusalem. So the people who are in Madīnah, they are facing Jerusalem, while their backs are towards Makkah. So Al-Barā' Bin Ma'rūr is saying, "I do not feel comfortable doing that, and I wanted to seek your advice on whether I should pray towards Al-Ka'bah." Ka'b Ibn Mālik said, "We responded by saying, 'Rasūlullāh ﷺ is praying towards Jerusalem and we do not want to contradict him.'" Al-Barā' Bin Ma'rūr said, "I am going to pray towards Al-Ka'bah," and from that day on, he started praying towards Al-Ka'bah. Now the delegation made it to Makkah. Al-Barā' Bin Ma'rūr ﷺ said to Ka'b Ibn Mālik, "My nephew, let us go after the Messenger of Allāh and ask him about what I have been doing on this journey. The disapproval I have seen in you has somewhat disturbed me." Let us go and ask Rasūlullāh ﷺ if what I did was right or wrong. Ka'b Ibn Mālik said, "We asked a man from Makkah, 'Where is Rasūlullāh ﷺ?' So the young man said 'Do you know him? Have you seen him before?'" Ka'b Ibn Mālik said, "No, we do not know him." The man responded by saying. "Do you know Al-'Abbās Bin 'Abdul Muttalib, his uncle?" They said, "Yes, we used to see him in Madīnah on business trips." Al-'Abbās Bin 'Abdul Muttalib used to frequent Madīnah doing business, so they knew him. The man said, "Muhammad ﷺ is the man sitting next to Al-'Abbās in the mosque, you will find him there." So Ka'b Ibn Mālik said, "I went with my uncle Al-Barā' Bin Ma'rūr, we into the mosque and we found Al-'Abbās Bin 'Abdul Muttalib and we came and greeted them. Muhammad ﷺ said, 'O Uncle Abul Fadl, do you know who these two men are?'" The elder son of 'Abbās, his name is Al-Fadl, and it was the tradition of the Arabs to give a name to the father; the father of so and so, the eldest son. So Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "Abul Fadl, do you know these two men?" Al-'Abbās said,

"Yes, this is Al-Barā' Bin Ma'rūr, the leader of his people, and this is Ka'b Ibn Mālik." Ka'b Ibn Mālik said, "I swear by Allāh, I will never forget the next statement that Rasūlullāh ﷺ made." Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "Do you mean the poet?" Ka'b Ibn Mālik was a poet, so when Al-'Abbās Bin 'Abdul Muttalib introduced Ka'b Ibn Mālik to Muhammad ﷺ and said this is Ka'b Ibn Mālik, Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "Is he the poet?" Ka'b Ibn Mālik says, "I can never forget that statement in my whole life." Why was it such a big deal to Ka'b Ibn Mālik? Because it shows that Rasūlullāh ﷺ has heard of him. And Ka'b Ibn Mālik was *so* proud and happy that Rasūlullāh ﷺ, his leader, the man who he meets for the first time and has been waiting for this moment to meet him, has heard of him, he might have even heard some of his works. So he was so proud and happy that Rasūlullāh ﷺ has already heard of him. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "*Ash-Shā'ir?* – Is he the poet?" Al-'Abbās said, "Yes." Al-Barā' Bin Ma'rūr said, "O Messenger of Allāh, I have come on this journey having been given guidance to Islām by Allāh. I had the idea of not facing my back to this building, so I prayed towards it. My friends opposed me in this, causing me concern. What do you think?" Muhammad ﷺ said, "You already had a Qiblah, a direction for Prayer, and you should have kept it." You should have remained praying towards the Qiblah that you know. Since then, Al-Barā' Bin Ma'rūr changed the direction. Now, with Rasūlullāh ﷺ, because at the time Rasūlullāh ﷺ was in Makkah, he was not turning his back towards Al-Ka'bah, he was facing Al-Ka'bah but in the direction of Jerusalem. But the people of Madīnah [such as] Al-Barā' Bin Ma'rūr, did not like that, and Subhān'Allāh, when Rasūlullāh ﷺ made Hijrah, Rasūlullāh ﷺ was feeling the same feeling.

Bay'atul 'Aqabah Ath-Thāniyah – The Second Pledge of Allegiance

Al-Ansār Secretly Gather in Al-'Aqabah

Ka'b Ibn Mālik said, "We then left to the Pilgrimage having made an agreement to meet the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ at Al-'Aqabah in the middle of the Tashrīq period." So they made an appointment to meet at a specific time. Ka'b Ibn Mālik says, "We kept this as a secret, none of our people knew about it," all of the Non-Muslims in our group knew nothing about our meeting with Rasūlullāh

ﷺ, it was secret, "except Abū Jābir – 'Abdullāh Bin Harām, he was one of our leaders and seniors. We went up to him and we told him, 'Abū Jābir, you are one of our noble leaders, and we would like you to give up your practices, otherwise one day you would end up as fuel for Hellfire'" Abū Jābir did accept Islām, so they told him about the private meeting, and he was one of the people who attended the meeting with them. In fact, he became one of the leaders who were appointed by Rasūlullāh ﷺ within this group. It was the time for the appointment, it was late at night. Ka'b Ibn Mālik said, "We were going towards Al-'Aqabah in ones or twos." They did not want to attract attention of the people; if you have a group of seventy going to meet Rasūlullāh ﷺ, it would turn the attention of others, so they were going in ones and twos until they all gathered in Al-'Aqabah, and they were all there, and then Rasūlullāh ﷺ showed up.

Al-'Abbās Bin 'Abdul Muttalib – The Only Non-Muslim in that Gathering

Rasūlullāh ﷺ was the only Muslim from Makkah to show up at that meeting, and he had one person with him, and that was the only Non-Muslim to attend the meeting, and who was that person? Al-'Abbās Bin 'Abdul Muttalib, the uncle of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. And Al-'Abbās Bin 'Abdul Muttalib was the first person to speak, he said,

> "Muhammad holds with us a position of which you are aware. We protect him from our people who think about him as we do. He is respected among his people and safe in his own town, but he is determined to join up with you. If you think you will keep trust with him in the invitation you have given to him, and will protect him from his opponents, then it is up to you to accept your responsibilities, but if you think you might deliver him over and abandon him after he has joined you, then leave him right now, he does have respect and protection among his own people and in his town."

Al-'Abbās Bin 'Abdul Muttalib wanted to make sure that this is a commitment from the side of Al- Ansār. Al-'Abbās is saying that we are going to take care of Muhammad ﷺ, we are protecting him, however he is insisting on us; now, are you going to protect him when he leaves to you or not? How come Al-'Abbās Bin 'Abdul Muttalib was there? Why was he present even though he was a Non-

Muslim? What is the reason he was there? Al-'Abbās Ibn 'Abdul Muttalib was the uncle of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, and even though he was a Non-Muslim, but he was one of the senior members of the clan of Banū Hāshim, and even though he was a Non-Muslim, but he was taking special interest in following and monitoring the activities of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, and he was one of the people who were offering Rasūlullāh ﷺ protection in Makkah after Abū Tālib passed away, and he wanted to make sure that his nephew will be safe when he leaves Makkah, and that is why Rasūlullāh ﷺ allowed him and included him in this meeting, because even though he was a Non-Muslim, but this is, again, an issue that relates to the tribe of Banū Hāshim; Muhammad ﷺ remains as a member of this clan, and his clan have interest in his safety and security. So Al-'Abbās Bin 'Abdul Muttalib attended as a representative of Banū Hāshim to make sure that their son is well protected. Now, you might say, 'Well, if Al-'Abbās was offering protection, how come it is different than the time of Abū Tālib?' Well the difference is that Abū Tālib had respect and power and authority over his people that none of his brothers had. So the ability of Al-'Abbās Bin 'Abdul Muttalib to defend Muhammad ﷺ was obviously less than the ability of Abū Tālib because of the seniority of Abū Tālib; Al-'Abbās was young, nevertheless, they still managed to protect him for that period, and they viewed it as a responsibility on them.

Al-Ansār Pledge Second Allegiance

When Al-'Abbās finished his statement, Al-Ansār said, "We have heard what you had to say. Now, O Messenger of Allāh, ask us what you want. Go ahead and speak to us about what you want from us, and take for yourself and for your Lord whatever you want." Rasūlullāh ﷺ stood up and said, "I ask you to pledge that you will defend me as you do your women and children." So now this is an upgrade, a step higher, than the earlier agreement in Al-Bay'atul 'Aqabah Al-Ūlā. Over there, it is for them to become Muslim, so they pledge allegiance on becoming Muslim, but now there is an additional term that was added to the contract, and that is offering Muhammad ﷺ with protection, and it is a defensive protection. He also told them in a different narration,

> "You must pledge to hear and obey, at times of both action and inaction. To give, whether times are hard or easy. And to advocate goodness and prohibit evil. You must speak out for Allāh and not fear any blame for supporting

Allāh. You must help and defend me if I come to you in the same way you help and defend yourselves, your wives, and your children."

Notice here the clarity in the Message of Rasūlullāh ﷺ; I am not coming to you just for you to protect me, but I am to be your leader; you listen to me and you obey me. And then he said, 'And you fear no one but Allāh.' I cannot make this move if they have any fear in your hearts, you have to be willing to commit themselves for this mission.

Al-Barā' Bin Ma'rūr stood up and he wanted to give Rasūlullāh ﷺ Bay'ah, and he said, "O Messenger of Allāh, I swear it, we are warriors from father to son over many generations." When Rasūlullāh ﷺ said I want you to protect me like you protect your women and children, Al-Barā' Bin Ma'rūr said, 'O Messenger of Allāh, we are warriors, we have inherited this from generation to generation.' And this is another thing Allāh ﷻ prepared Al-Khazraj with, that they were fighters, they were strong, and they had this reputation in Arabia. And while Al-Barā' Bin Ma'rūr was speaking, Abul Haitham stood up and he interrupted, and he said, "O Messenger of Allāh, we have certain ties to others (referring to the Jews), and if we break these, we are concerned that if God gives you victory, you might return to your people and abandon us." Abul Haitham is saying that this commitment means that we might get into conflicts with people whom we have agreements with, so in case you win, are you going to stay with us or are you going to leave us? You see, we are willing to enter into this agreement for our whole life, but are you going to stay with us or are you going to leave us? Rasūlullāh ﷺ responded after smiling, he said, "If your blood be sought, our blood shall be sought. And your destruction is mine as well. I am of you, and you are of me. I will battle those who battle you and make peace with those whom you make peace." And Rasūlullāh ﷺ kept to his agreement; when Makkah was opened, the hometown of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, he left it and he went back with the people of Al-Ansār to Madīnah and he remained there until he died. Rasūlullāh ﷺ stayed with the people of Al-Ansār until the last moment. In another narration, there is another interruption; when the Ansār started extending their hands to pledge allegiance to Rasūlullāh ﷺ, As'ad Bin Zurārah, the early Muslim among them, stood up and interrupted and said, "Slowly now." He is telling his people, 'Take it easy, slow down.' "We only hurried here because we know that he is the Messenger of Allāh. Bringing him out now

however, would be a provocation to all the Arabs, and would cause you to lose your elite, and would box you in with swords raised against you. If you are able to withstand that, then adopt him, and it will be up to Allāh to reward you, but if you are people who have great fear for yourselves, then leave him and make that fact plain, that course would be more forgivable in Allāh's sight." He said, 'Do you realise what agreement we are entering in? If we take Rasūlullāh ﷺ with us, that means that we are going against the whole world, and we will be boxed in with swords surrounding us! We might lose our elites, we might spend our money, we might be killed. Now, we either stand up and commit, otherwise if you have any fear in your hearts, pull out now when it is not too late.' They pushed As'ad Bin Zurārah away and said, "We will give pledge of allegiance." They said, "Keep away from us! We will not renegade on this pledge, we will never deny it!" Allāhu Akbar! Look at the commitment of Al-Ansār and the courage that they had.

This is Such a Profitable Deal! We will Never Give Up!

Now, when Rasūlullāh ﷺ asked them to protect him, they asked, "What will we get in exchange?" We are going to offer you protection even if we lose our lives and our wealth; what are you going to give us? This is not a one-sided agreement; we are offering you help, what will you give us in exchange? What did Rasūlullāh ﷺ say? He responded by telling them one word, "Al-Jannah – Paradise." Nothing else. I am not going to give you kingdom, I am not promising you wealth, I am not going to give you a few cabinet seats or ministries in my government, I am not going to promise you succession after me, all what I can promise you is Jannah. And what was their response? They said, "*Rabihal Bay'! Lā Niqīlu Walā Nastaqīl* –This is such a profitable deal! We will never give up." They said what is better than Jannah? Allāhu Akbar, compare this with Baiharah Bin Farās who said, "I am going to take this young man and eat the Arabs with him." And then he asked Rasūlullāh ﷺ, "If Allāh gives you victory, will you then transfer power to us?" Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "No, that is up to Allāh." He said, "We do not want to have anything [to do] with you." Al-Ansār said, "That is a good deal." That is actually the best deal – Jannah.

Quraish Learn of the Secret Meeting

Somehow the news reached to Quraish. You know, it is not easy to conceal a meeting of seventy plus people in the crowd of Al-Hajj. In one narration it states that it was Shaitān who announced it to the people of Quraish, but regardless of how it happened, the news reached to the people of Quraish. They investigated the matter further and it led them to the right direction, it led them to Al-Ansār. So next day early in the morning, a group of leaders from Quraish went and visited the campgrounds of Al-Aws Wal-Khazraj. They went to them and said, "We have heard that you have met with Muhammad ﷺ and that you have offered to take him with you and give him protection. Now, listen people of Yathrib, you are the last people on the face of the Earth whom we want to have a fight with." Because Quraish knew that Al-Aws Wal-Khazraj are not an easy opponent, these are fighters, truly as it was said [that] we have inherited the skills of war generation through generation, so the people of Quraish were saying, "We do not want to have a fight with you. So what have you done? Did you really meet with Muhammad ﷺ?" The Muslims among Al-Aws Wal-Khazraj remained silent, and the Non-Believers started speaking, they said, "That never happened, we never met with Muhammad ﷺ," and they were speaking the truth, they had no idea of this secret meeting that happened, because only the Muslims knew about it, and they kept on refuting that and said, "We never met Muhammad ﷺ, we had nothing to do with him, we did not see him." Ka'b Ibn Mālik said, "We the Muslims were staring at each other silently, and we did not speak." The people of Quraish were becoming convinced. Now, Ka'b Ibn Mālik said, "I wanted to change the topic, I wanted to change the subject, so there was Al-Hārith Bin Hishām, one of the leaders of Quraish who was present, and he was wearing some brand new sandals." Ka'b Ibn Mālik said, "I told Abū Jābir, who is one of our seniors, 'O Abū Jābir, being one of our leaders, you cannot even afford to wear new sandals like this young man of Quraish?'" What is wrong with you, you are one of our leaders and you are wearing these old shoes, while this young man of Quraish is wearing these brand new sandals? Now, this young man of Quraish was quite upset by that statement; what are you talking about, my shoes? Why are you so impressed by my shoes? So he took them off and threw them at K'ab Ibn Mālik. Abū Jābir said, "Take it easy Ka'b Ibn Mālik, you have made the young man angry. Give him back his sandals." Ka'b Ibn Mālik said, "No, I will not give them back to

him. *Hādhā Fa'lun Hasan, Sa'aslubuhū* – This is a good omen, I am going to take off from him spoils of war." And that was the end of the meeting. This meeting between Rasūlullāh ﷺ and Al-Ansār, we can fairly say that it is the most important meeting that Rasūlullāh ﷺ had so far, it was a turning point in Islām. Finally now Rasūlullāh ﷺ has a solid base to start spreading the Message from with protection, and free them to go out and propagate the Message of Allāh ﷻ. This is *Bay'atul 'Aqabah Ath-Thāniyah*.

★★★

Lessons

Do not Procrastinate

Number One: Ka'b Ibn Mālik states, "When we left Madīnah, *Qad Sallaynā Wa Faqihnā* – we had already learned our Prayers and understood our religion." This happened before Rasūlullāh ﷺ made Hijrah. So for those brothers and sisters who are delaying their learning until somehow they can travel overseas and go and study with the Shuyūkh, or get admission to an Islāmic college, you are just finding excuses for yourself, you need to study and learn now. Ka'b Ibn Mālik said we already learned our Prayers and we understood our religion even though Rasūlullāh ﷺ was not there yet. It is true that they had a teacher with them, Mus'ab Bin 'Umair, but this statement has a message in it, that we were ready, we were learning. Do not put off your learning, study Islām, spend time to learn the Religion of Allāh, try to get the best out of the situation. If you have a Sheikh to teach you, that is the best. You do not have a Sheikh? Find someone who is more learned than you. Cannot find that? Take a book and study. But do not give it up, do not put it off, because you might never get the time when you are free to do it. And procrastination is not an excuse; on the Day of Judgement, Ibn Al-Qayyim says, if you go through the Āyāt of Qurān, you will find that the majority of the screaming of the people of Hellfire in Qurān is because of their procrastination, because they delayed. The verses that narrate their sayings in Qurān, 'O Allāh take us back to this world so that we can believe! O Allāh take us back to this world so that we can give! O Allāh take us back!' [But] it is too late. So do not put it off.

Islām is a Religion of Sacrifice

Number Two: When Rasūlullāh ﷺ told the Ansār his terms of the agreement, and they asked, "What are we getting in exchange?" Rasūlullāh ﷺ told them, "Jannah." Dear brothers and sisters, in our Islāmic work, we should be working for the sake of Jannah, to please Allāh ﷻ; that should be our objective. Not to get fame, not to make money, not for the socialising aspect of it, we should purify our intentions every time consistently and make sure that we are doing everything for the sake of Allāh. This Religion needs sacrifice, and if you are waiting for an exchange, if you are waiting for a payback in this world, you might not get it. This is a religion that demands you to give it everything, because you are getting in exchange Jannah, which is more valuable than anything that you could give. Rasūlullāh ﷺ says [that] what Allāh is offering you is very expensive, what Allāh is offering you is Jannah. We need to pay the price.

We Need to be Prepared and Ready

Number Three: Rasūlullāh ﷺ was very clear in what he was asking others in conveying the Message. Rasūlullāh ﷺ made it very clear to the Ansār that what you are getting into is risky, what you are getting into is a struggle. Rasūlullāh ﷺ did not promise them wealth, did not promise them power; Rasūlullāh ﷺ told them that you need to protect me, you might be attacked. So we need to prepare ourselves as Muslims and realise that this is not an easy walk, it is not a walk in the park. To establish the Religion of Allāh, it is a struggle and it demands a lot of sacrifice, and we need to prepare ourselves for that. And 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb said, "*Ikhshawshanū, Fa'innan Ni'mah Lā Tad'hum* – Roughen up, because bounties might not continue forever." Easy life might not go on for good, so we need to be prepared and ready.

This is an Organised Religion

Number Four: After the second pledge of Al-'Aqabah – remember again [that] Rasūlullāh ﷺ met with seventy plus, and there were some others maybe who were Muslim who did not come – Rasūlullāh ﷺ immediately after taking the pledge of allegiance asked them to appoint twelve *Nuqabā'* – twelve leaders. So he divided them into smaller groups and appointed on them leaders. This shows

you that this is an organised religion, and now since there is a group living away from the organisation structure of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, Rasūlullāh ﷺ wanted them to have their own organisation structure. So he immediately divided the seventy into groups and appointed twelve leaders among them, and these are the Nuqabā' who will report back to Rasūlullāh ﷺ and whom he will give them instructions. So this is also another lesson to learn, that we need to be organised in a manageable fashion.

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Beginning of Hijrah to Al-Madīnah

Rasūlullāh ﷺ Dreams about Hijrah to Madīnah

Rasūlullāh, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said in Muslim Imām Ahmad, "I was shown the land of your Hijrah, it is a land with a lot of palm trees between two volcanic rocky tracks." *Al-Harrah* is a rocky volcanic track. So this was the beginning of the Hijrah to Al-Madīnah. Rasūlullāh ﷺ says in another Hadīth narrated in Al-Bukhārī, "I have seen in my dream that I am migrating from Makkah to a land rich with palm trees, I initially thought that it is Yamāmah or Hajar, but then it turned out to be Yathrib." Yathrib is the old name of Madīnah which was changed by Rasūlullāh ﷺ, and Rasūlullāh ﷺ banned the use of the name Yathrib, in fact Rasūlullāh ﷺ says that if anyone says Yathrib, they should make *Istighfār*. Rasūlullāh ﷺ wanted to change the identity of this city; Yathrib had a history of rivalry and warfare, and Rasūlullāh ﷺ now is giving it a new identity, it is Madīnah, *Madīnat Rasūlullāh*. What does Madīnah mean? [It means] it is the town of Rasūlullāh ﷺ.

The Hijrah of Umm Salamah رضي الله عنها

Umm Salamah narrates this Hadīth, she says, "We came back from Al-Habashah, and my husband wanted to go again to Al-Habashah, but then he heard that Madīnah is the new land of Hijrah and that there are some Muslims there, so he decided to take his family and go to Madīnah." And that was one year before Al-'Aqabah, so he was one of the earliest to go. So she says, "He mounted me on a camel and he placed my son on my lap and we were ready to leave Makkah, but then my family came to me and said, 'We are not going to

allow you to go with your husband, we are not going to allow him to take you with him to that foreign land.' So they pulled me away from my husband." When Banū Al-Asad, the family of Abū Salamah, saw that, they came in and said, "Well, we are not going to allow you to take the child," so they took the child with them. So now you have Abū Salamah [who] is separated from Umm Salamah, and they are both separated from their son. The family of Umm Salamah took Umm Salamah, the family of Abū Salamah took Salamah the child, and now the three were separated. So Abū Salamah ended up making Hijrah alone, while Umm Salamah and Salamah were separated in Makkah. Umm Salamah said, "I would go out of my home every day to the valley and sit on a rock and cry for hours, and I would do that on a daily basis, and that continued for about a year." Imagine this woman, mother, missing her husband, missing her child, she said I would go out everyday in the morning and just cry. [She continues,] "So then one of Banū Al-Mughīrah, my relatives, saw the condition I was in, (this was her uncle), and said to my family, "Are you not having any mercy and sympathy on this woman? Allow her to go and join her husband." So they finally agreed and they told Umm Salamah, "You are free to leave." When the family of the husband knew [of] this, they gave her her son, and they said, "Now you can join your husband." So Umm Salamah picked up her child Salamah and she headed to Madīnah. Now she was alone, had no one with her; she mounted on a camel with her son and left towards Madīnah, travelling alone.

When she reached to At-Tan'īm, which is not far away from Makkah; a few kilometres outside of Al-Makkah, she met with 'Uthmān Bin Talhah. When he saw her he said, "Daughter of Abū Umayyah, where are you heading?" She said, "I am going to Madīnah." He told her, "Are you having anyone accompany you?" She said, "No, I am alone." He said, "Well, I will accompany you, it is not appropriate to leave you alone in this travel." 'Uthmān Ibn Talhah was a Mushrik, he was a Non-Believer, but he saw this woman, felt sympathy for her, and wanted to help her out, and he was guarding her and protecting her on this journey between Makkah and Madīnah. Umm Salamah ﷺ says, "And I swear, I was never in the company of any Arab more honourable than him. When we made a stop, he would make my camel kneel, and then he would move away until I would have dismounted. And then he would come back and take the camel and tie it. And then he would leave and go and sleep under a tree, far

away from me. Next day in the morning, he would bring my camel, prepare the saddle, and then he would call me to come and mount, and he would leave, and when I was on the camel, he would come back. And then he would guide me through this trip. He continued doing that until we reached to the outskirts of Madīnah and we saw Qubā' in the distance. He pointed to Qubā' and said, 'See that village over there? That is where your husband is.' And he said, 'Now you are on your own.'" Umm Salamah comments and says, "I know of no other family in Islām who suffered like that of Abū Salamah, and I swear I never had a more honourable companion than 'Uthmān Bin Talhah." She was impressed by ['Uthmān], she says 'Uthmān Bin Talhah had so much nobility because keep in mind the animosity between the Muslims and Non-Muslims, so for 'Uthmān Ibn Talhah to go out of his way and to accompany a woman who is leaving Makkah, and that is supposed to be a no-no, you are not supposed to leave Makkah for Madīnah, he went out of his way and supported her and helped her in this honourable fashion, she liked that and she appreciated it. 'Uthmān Ibn Talhah would later on become Muslim, after most of the prominent members of his family were killed in the Battle of Uhud. But later on he did become Muslim, him and Khālid Ibn Al-Walīd and 'Amr Ibn Al-'Aas at the same time. Also, 'Uthmān Ibn Talhah is from the family which were the Keepers of the Keys to Al-Ka'bah, and Rasūlullāh ﷺ kept the keys with them and the keys are still with them today; the family of Banū 'Abd Ad-Dār, they are the ones who hold the keys to Al-Ka'bah until this day and time.

The Hijrah of 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb ؓ

The next story is the story of 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb. 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb ؓ says, "When we decided to make Hijrah to Madīnah, I agreed with 'Ayyāsh Bin Abī Rabī'ah and Hishām Bin Al-'Aas to accompany [them] and to go together to Madīnah. We set an appointed time to meet at Suruf (this is an area outside of Makkah). We said if morning comes and any of us is missing, that means the person is detained and we should just go ahead and migrate." Morning came and Hishām Bin Al-'Aas did not show up, so 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb and 'Ayyāsh Bin Abī Rabī'ah were on their own. They reached to Madīnah, and this was before the Hijrah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ; Rasūlullāh ﷺ was the last one to migrate. They reached to Madīnah. Abū Jahl was the half-brother of 'Ayyāsh Bin Abī Rabī'ah, so Abū Jahl and his brother Al-Hārith Bin Hishām went all the way to

Madīnah to bring back ʻAyyāsh Bin Abī Rabīʻah. They went to Al-Madīnah and they told ʻAyyāsh, "Your mother has made an oath that she will not comb her hair and she will not take shadow until you come back." So she will remain in the heat under the sun of Makkah, and she will not comb her hair, until you come back. The exact statement was, "Your mother has warned that she will not allow a comb to touch her hair until she sees you, nor will she shelter from the sun." ʻUmar Ibn Al-Khattāb was listening, ʻUmar Ibn Al-Khattāb told ʻAyyāsh Bin Abī Rabīʻah, "These people want to deceive you, they want to entice you and take you back, it is a trick. And regarding the oath of your mother, when her hair is filled with lice, she will comb, and when she feels the severe heat of Makkah, she will take shelter. So forget about it and do not go with them." ʻUmar Ibn Al-Khattāb says about himself, "*Lastu Bil Khibb Wal Khibb Ikhdā'nī* – I am not a man who tricks others, neither do I allow anyone to trick me." ʻUmar Ibn Al-Khattāb told ʻAyyāsh Bin Abī Rabīʻah, 'Do not go with them.' ʻAyyāsh Ibn Abī Rabīʻah was now feeling sorry for his mother and ʻUmar was not able to convince him. ʻAyyāsh Ibn Abī Rabīʻah decided that he was going to go with them. ʻUmar Ibn Al-Khattāb told him, "Well, if you insist, then at least take this camel of mine with you. This is a fast and strong camel, if you ever feel suspicious, run away." So ʻAyyāsh Ibn Abī Rabīʻah, Abū Jahl and Al-Hārith Bin Hishām are now on their way back to Makkah, [and] everyone had their own camel. Abū Jahl started complaining about his camel, "What a horrible camel, it is too difficult, it is slow." And then he asked ʻAyyāsh Ibn Abī Rabīʻah, "Can you please switch camels just for a while? This camel of mine is causing me trouble." ʻAyyāsh Ibn Abī Rabīʻah, being the nice man he is, agreed. So they now stopped the camels and they had the camels kneel down. As soon as the camel of ʻAyyāsh reached the ground, both men attacked him and tied him up. And they dragged him into Makkah and they enticed him and he apostatised. And the same thing happened to Hishām Ibn Al-ʻAas, the third partner who was detained in Makkah.

ʻUmar Ibn Al-Khattāb said, "We used to say among ourselves, the Muslims, that whoever stayed behind, and foot in, and was enticed by the Non-Believers, Allāh ﷻ will never forgive them; that was the understanding we had. And that was also the understanding going around among the ones who stayed behind." They felt that they had lost hope; that is it, you have apostatised, there is no way Allāh can forgive your sins. And that was their common understanding for a

while, until Rasūlullāh ﷺ made Hijrah to Al-Madīnah and received the Revelation [where] Allāh ﷻ says: **O My servants who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allāh. Indeed, Allāh forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful. And return [in repentance] to your Lord and submit to Him before the punishment comes upon you; then you will not be helped. And follow the best of what was revealed to you from your Lord before the punishment comes upon you suddenly while you do not perceive.**[104] 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb wrote this verse and he sent it to Hishām Ibn Al-'Aas, Hishām Ibn Al-'Aas was the one who was detained in Makkah. Hishām Bin Al-'Aas said, "I received that verse, and I would go up to Tuwā and I would read it and re-read it, and I would read it again and again and again. And for a few days I would go out in this area and just keep on reading that verse, trying to understand why 'Umar sent it to me, what is the meaning of this verse, until I understood that this verse was revealed talking about us, and saying that no matter what you do, Allāh can still forgive you if you seek forgiveness, no matter what happened, even if you stayed behind, even if you were enticed by the Non-Believers, you still have a chance, you should not give up." Hishām Ibn Al-'Aas said, "I asked Allāh for forgiveness, mounted my camel, and went towards Al-Madīnah."

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Lessons

Two lessons to learn from this:

The Forgiveness of Allāh

Number One: The forgiveness of Allāh. Allāh is All-Forgiving. No matter what you do, never give up, ask Allāh to forgive you. The greatest sin which is Shirk, if a person repents from it and goes back to Allāh, Allāh will forgive it. But one needs to ask Allāh for forgiveness before the punishment comes, because Allāh ﷻ says: **And return [in repentance] to your Lord and submit to Him before the punishment comes upon you; then you will not be helped.**[105] You need to do it before it is too late.

Beware of the Non-Believers

Second Lesson: Beware of the Non-Believers. Beware, be careful. ‘Ayyāsh Ibn Abī Rabī‘ah trusted Abū Jahl; how can he trust such a person? Do not let the sweet words and the nice-talk of the enemies of Allāh sway you. Some of us are naïve, they hear a good comment here and there, they hear a nice statement that is coming from this politician or that, and they fall in their trap. Beware. Somebody who has a long record of fighting Islām, their record should speak for them. So we should not be tricked. ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb; this plot of Abū Jahl did not pass on him, he knew, he knew, and he told ‘Ayyāsh Bin Abī Rabī‘ah, ‘Do not believe them, they are lying. And your mother, when her head gets filled with lice, she will have to comb it. And no one will survive in the heat of Makkah; that is an oath that she will have to break.’ So we should be careful. And Allāh ﷻ says: ***Wallāhu A’lamu Bi A’dā'ikum*** **– And Allāh is most knowing of your enemies.**[106] And He has told us who our enemies are, we should not fall in their trap, we should be careful, and we should beware.

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Endnotes

[1] Al-Fātihah
[2] Al-Ahzāb: 45-46
[3] Tā-Hā: 25-28
[4] At-Tawbah: 24
[5] Āl ‘Imrān: 31
[6] Ibrāhīm: 37
[7] Tā-Hā: 14
[8] Al-Burūj: 11
[9] Al-Mā'idah: 119
[10] I believe the Sheikh mistakenly said Aryāt in place of Abū Rughāl.
[11] Al-Muddaththir: 31
[12] Al-Fīl
[13] Al-An‘ām: 124
[14] Sheikh said parents, I have changed it to family.
[15] Sheikh said abdomen, I changed it to chest as he goes on to say chest further on.
[16] An-Nūh: 5
[17] An-Nūh: 8-9
[18] Mā'idah: 2
[19] Sūrah Quraish
[20] Āl-‘Imrān: 42
[21] Al-Ahzāb: 37
[22] Al-An‘ām: 33
[23] Al-Baqarah: 216
[24] Al-Baqarah: 127
[25] Āl ‘Imrān: 96
[26] Āl ‘Imrān: 190-191
[27] Muhammad: 17
[28] Replaced apostate as apostatise throughout the book.
[29] John, 1:11
[30] An-Najm: 3
[31] Al-Ambiyā': 92
[32] Tāhā: 14
[33] Al-Mā'idah: 67
[34] ‘Abasa: 1-2

[35] At-Tahrīm: 1
[36] Al-‘Alaq: 1-5
[37] Isiah: 29:11
[38] Isiah: 29:12-13
[39] These are the first three Ayāt of Sūrah At-Tīn
[40] Al-‘Alaq: 1-5
[41] Al-‘Ankabūt: 48
[42] Al-Baqarah: 102
[43] Al-Muzzammil: 5
[44] An-Najm: 13-14
[45] At-Tahrīm: 11
[46] Ash-Shu‘arā': 214
[47] Al-Masad: 1-2
[48] Al-‘Alaq: 1-6
[49] Al-‘Alaq: 1-2
[50] Al-Muzzammil: 1-2
[51] Al-Muddaththir: 1-2
[52] Al-Furqān: 41
[53] Al-Baqarah: 247
[54] Al-A’rāf: 199
[55] Al-Hijr: 6
[56] Sād: 4
[57] Al-An‘ām: 33
[58] Sheikh said Haddād but I changed it to ‘Abbād as this is the name he mentions a few sentences earlier.
[59] Sheikh says obsessed but I think he meant possessed, therefore I have changed it to possessed, and I have done this throughout the book.
[60] Al-Muddaththir: 18-25
[61] Al-Furqān: 5
[62] Al-Qalam: 9
[63] Al-Kāfirun: 1-2
[64] Al-Kāfirun: 6
[65] Changed beforehand to before us.
[66] Al-A’rāf: 146
[67] Az-Zukhruf: 31
[68] Al-Baqarah: 286

[69] Al-Anfāl: 30
[70] Fussilat: 1-3
[71] Fussilat: 13
[72] Muhammad: 17
[73] Al-A'rāf: 199
[74] Al-An'ām: 33
[75] Al-Baqarah: 216
[76] Al-Hāqqah: 41
[77] Al-Hāqqah: 42
[78] Tā-Hā: 1-8
[79] Al-Mulk: 10
[80] Āl-'Imrān: 191
[81] Al-Muddaththir: 31
[82] Al-Qamar: 1-2
[83] Sheikh said Christians but I think he meant Muslims, therefore I changed it.
[84] Ar-Rūm: 1-5
[85] At-Tawbah: 113
[86] Al-Qasas: 56
[87] Al-Baqarah: 256
[88] Al-Inshirāh: 6
[89] Maryam: 57
[90] At-Tūr: 1-4
[91] As-Saffāt: 6
[92] An-Nūr: 54 | Sheikh mistakenly says "Wa-Mā 'Alaika Illal Balāghul Mubīn." As far as I know, and have checked, it should be 'Alainā and not 'Alaika, as mentioned in verse 17 of Sūrah Yā-Sīn. This Āyah, **And there is not upon the Messenger except the [responsibility for] clear notification**, comes up multiple times in Qurān, but with slightly different wordings, therefore I have replaced what the Sheikh said over here with verse 54 of Sūrah An-Nūr, as this specific Ayah is most befitting to what he is explaining here.
[93] Tā-Hā: 83-85
[94] Tā-Hā: 14
[95] Narrated by Muslim in Kitāb Al-Īmān
[96] Maryam: 59
[97] Al-Al-Isrā': 1
[98] Al-Inshirāh: 6

[99] Al-Ahqāf: 29-30
[100] Al-Ahqāf: 31-32
[101] Sheikh said 'rationist' but I think he meant rationalist, as I do not believe rationist is a term that exists.
[102] Sheikh admits he got Mafrūq and Hānī mixed up thus far, therefore I have replaced Mafrūq with Hānī.
[103] Al-Baqarah: 216
[104] Az-Zumar: 53-55
[105] Az-Zumar: 54
[106] An-Nisā': 45